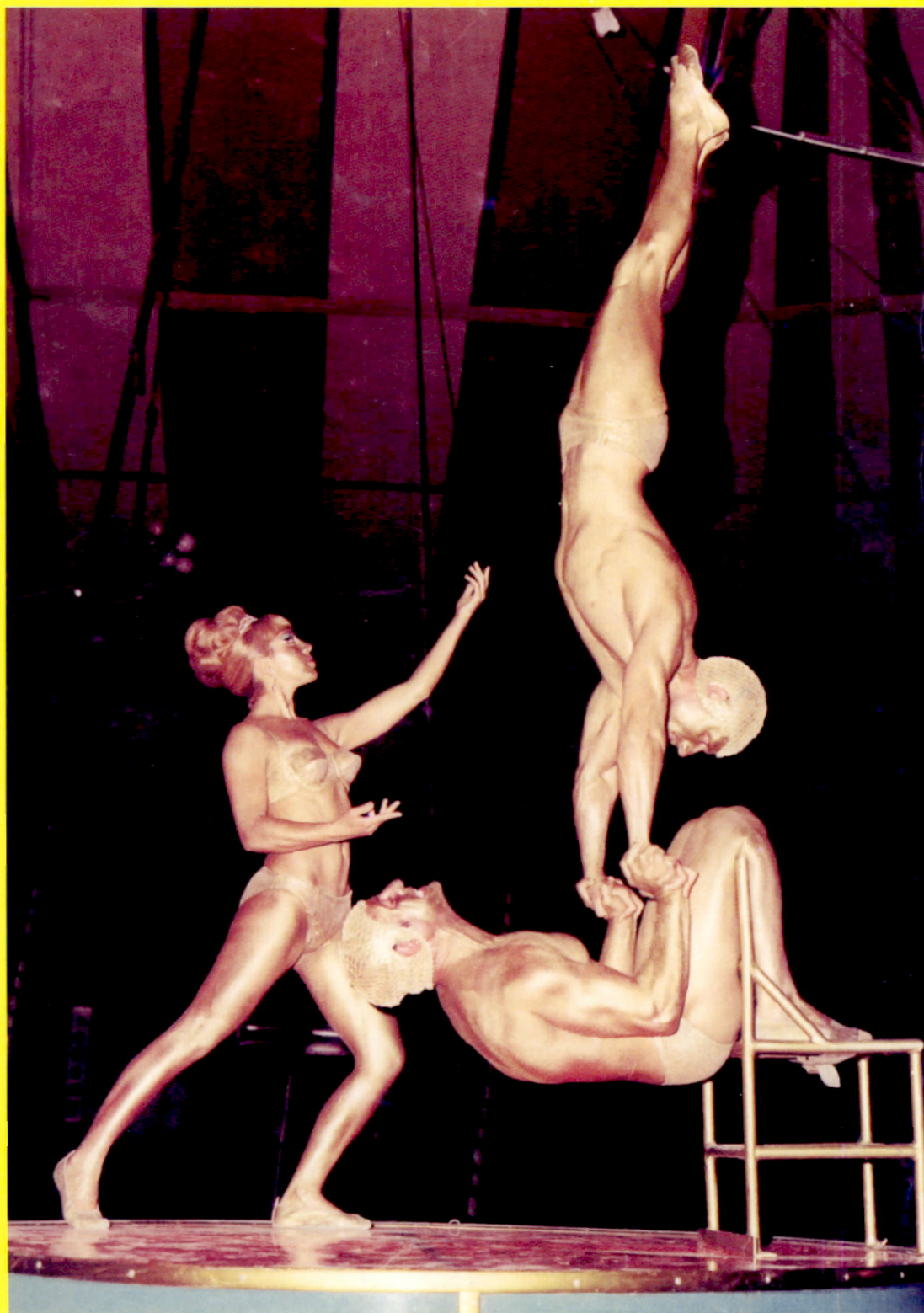


# BANDWAGON

THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

July-August 1999





# BANDWAGON

## THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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**FRED D. PFENING, JR. EDITOR AND PUBLISHER**

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Living statues acts appeared with many shows from the 1880s to the present. A group of men and women often struck poses inside a round curtain which was then raised.

By 1914 the performers appeared in gold body paint, rather than white make-up.

In 1933 the Ringling-Barnum circus presented gold statue acts in all rings and stages.

In 1982, the Les Victoria group, imported from France, was presented by Circus Vargas. This was a balancing act and set the standard for gold acts such as those presented on Ringling-Barnum in recent years and Barnum's Kaleidoscope in 1999.

The 1983 Les Victoria act is on the cover.

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The front cover of a 1922 Al G. Barnes Circus courier is pictured on the back cover.

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# THE ORIGINAL CARSON & BARNES CIRCUS

## THE JACK MOORE SHOWS

### PART ONE

BY FRED D. PFENING, JR.

Jack Bonham Moore, a Marshall, Texas boy, was born in 1919 and served in the Navy during World War II. He started his first show in Sherman, Texas with a two wheeled trailer and some side wall showing movies.

By 1952 he was operating a two reel motion picture show in a tent, using a 60 foot big top with two 30s and a smaller one for a side show. The outfit was a combination of circus, hillbilly music and motion pictures. He called it the Jack Moore and Kelly Bros. Show. He had a wrestling bear, a pony drill, chimp, dogs and a trained mule. His daughter Wanda sang and danced and Happy Hanks produced a hillbilly music program. A candy pitch was included in the program. Early in his career he envisioned a route that would take his show off the beaten path.

Moore had wintered in Marshall and Jefferson, Texas. In the fall of 1953 journeyed to the epicenter of high grass tented operas, Hugo, Oklahoma, a cross roads in Southern Oklahoma that would produce over sixteen different circuses.

He changed the title to Jack Moore's Tex Carson Jamboree for 1954. It was inevitable that Moore would seek out the Emperor of Hugo, Dore R. Miller, whose storehouse of circus equipment and animals could have been called the Hall Farm of Oklahoma. Over the years he would draw from the repertory pool of staff and acts that called Hugo home. The staff people would rotate around the Hugo



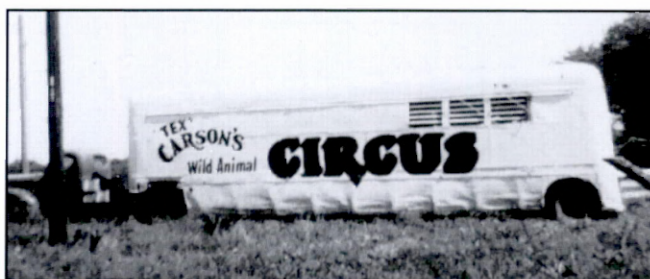
Jack Moore, high grass circus man. All illustrations are from the Pfening Archives unless otherwise credited.

shows, Kelly-Miller, Cole & Walters and others.

#### 1954

In 1954 Miller saw Moore as a comer and made an in-kind investment in the Tex Carson outfit. Miller took a half interest in the show, a practice Miller continued with many of the circuses originating in the Oklahoma community. Miller's

Tex Carson horse semi in 1954.



used trucks and elephant got the enlarged Moore show off the ground.

The January 30, 1954 *Billboard* told the story: "Hugo, Oklahoma, January 23. Jack Moore and D. R. Miller have combined forces to launch the Tex Carson Wild Animal Show this season as a bigger show than in past years. Moore has had the show out for several seasons and in recent times has quartered it here. Miller, co-owner of Kelly-Miller, Cole & Walters and Miller's Rodeo, became interested in the show last year and will make additions to it for 1954.

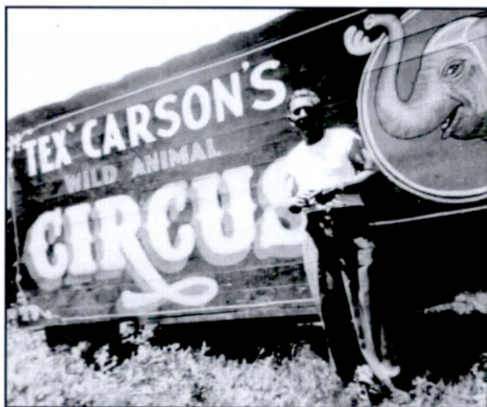
"The circus will move on eight trucks, including three semi-trailers. Canvas will be a 70 with one 40 and two 30's for the big, top and a 40 by 100 for side show and animal display combined.

"One of Miller's elephant trainers is readying a large elephant (Mable). A four-horse liberty act is being added and the stock doubles in high school. Four chimps will be carried and two will perform. Other acts include unridable mule, wrestling bear, pickout pony drill and riding dogs and monks.

"Miller and Moore made no announcement as to opening date for the show or territory it will play. They said make-up of the staff would be announced later."

The May 1, 1954 *Billboard* noted: "Roxton, Texas. April 24. First heavy rain in months, keeping farmers from the





Jack Moore on the Tex Carson Circus in 1954.

fields but assuring success for crops, gave the Tex Carson Circus a near full turnout for its first stand of the season here Wednesday (14). Afternoon show was delayed until 4 p.m. by a soft lot and drew only about 100 persons.

"Show is managed by Jack Moore. D. R. Miller has an interest in it. It moved from Hugo, Oklahoma quarters with but one incident. Mrs. Moore's house trailer was damaged on a bridge.

"Two tents, a 60 with three 30s and a 40 by 60, house the show, side show has lead stock and two trucks of caged animals. It moves on eight trucks, doubling last year's line-up.

"Ninety-minute program includes a Miller elephant, liberty act (4), menage, pickout pony, pony drill (3), dogs, riding monkeys, ladders, chimp, monkeys and trick mule. Concert has a wrestling bear and H. R. Ray magic. Ray also clowns the big show.

"Midway includes chimp pit show, two concession stands and a ticket wagon."

#### 1955

The 1955 season opened on April 1 in Ladonia, Texas. By May 10 it was in New Mexico at Tatum. The route took the show into Utah and Colorado. It entered Washington on July 12 at Pomery and remained in that state until August 22. Oregon and Nevada dates followed. On October 1 the circus was in Arizona at Kingman. It headed home, playing New

Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma to close at Gould on November 5. The circus played 216 towns with a total season mileage of 10,838.

The May 7 *Billboard* reported: "Anton, Texas. The Tex Carson Circus has been racking up good business and with one exception, when a tornado hit close to the show, has been

getting good weather. The show lost a day's business to the storm but suffered no damage, despite a heavy fall of king-sized hailstones.

"Performance includes: Tex Carson liberty horses, Blonda Ward's monkeys; Hazel Cappy, Fredia Jacobson and Wanda Moore, menage; Happy Hanks, Kelly, Hiko and Knowles, clowns; Jack Moore, ponies; Blonda Ward, dogs; Wanda DeWayne, traps; Jack Moore and Fredia Jacobson, elephant."

Tex Carson played Aztec, New Mexico on May 20. Pete Schuch, *Billboard* agent, provided this short piece to the local newspaper: "The Tex Carson Circus has been very successful through New Mexico. The matinees have been weak, but night play has been very good, averaging 2,000.

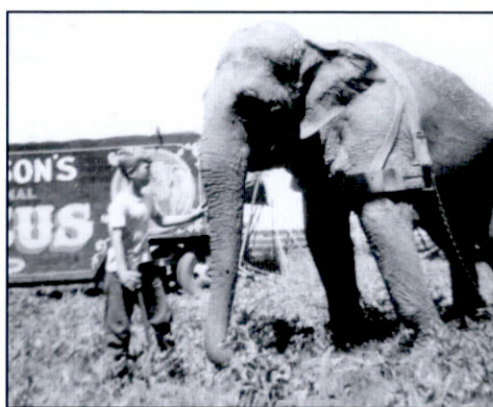
"The circus did very well in Aztec and neighboring towns.

"On the way into Aztec an 11 year old chimpanzee gave birth to a two pound baby.

"A new light plant has been added to the equipment. The old one was demolished when a trailer hitch broke.

"Due to their weight, the elephants and camels had to walk up the hills

Tex Carson horse semi-trailer in 1954. Bob MacDougall collection.



The single elephant on the Carson show in 1954.

coming into the mountain territory.

"Tex Carson [Moore], the star of the show, handled all the animal acts."

The September 8 *Billboard* noted: "Spray, Oregon. Tex Carson Circus has succeeded in finding fresh territory. The show has been far off the beaten path recently. The circus has five show-owned trucks, an elephant, mule, camel, midget cow, four bears, ten ponies, a lion, monkeys, chimp, one ring under a 60 with two 30s, electric organ, snake pit show, side show top for animals and grease joint."

The November 6 *Billboard* reported: "Hugo, Oklahoma. October 29. The Tex Carson Circus, owned by Jack Moore, will close the season November 6 and move back into winter quarters here. The show's 1955 route took it into the far West and Rocky Mountain area, with some sections giving spotty business."

That year the show issued a route sheet which listed the staff: Jack Moore, owner-manager; D. R. Miller, Consultant and leasee; Angela Moore, secretary and treasurer; Kelly Swim, purchasing agent; John (Shorty) Lynn, superintendent; Aaron A. Hanks, legal adjuster; Wanda Moore, superintendent of front door; Col. Tex Carson, announcer; Lee Bradley, side show manager; George Bell, superintendent of concessions; Melvin Haugen, concession manager; Ronald Nelson, electrician and mechanic;





Emmett Hickman, superintendent of canvas; Diane Wilson, manager of pit show; Chief Noah, superintendent of ring stock; Sabu Cherro, boss elephant man; Mike Moore, superintendent of props; Alonzo Ward, mail man; Erma Hansen, superintendent of wardrobe; Al Hansen, 24 hour man; Joe Edwards, banners; Marie Loter, organist; Beryl Hunter, Drummer, John D. Foss, general agent; Sam Price, brigade agent. Billers: Bob Dickman, Russ Martin, Bob Smith, Kelly Monroe.

The 1955 program consisted of 21 displays featuring trained animals, dancing bears, liberty horses, pony drills, monkeys, educated canines, Cutie the famous pickout pony, chimpanzees, menage horses, elephants, clown mule, Irma White and her All American Dream Girls of Warner Bros. Studio (KFWB), aerial ballet, and the clowns.

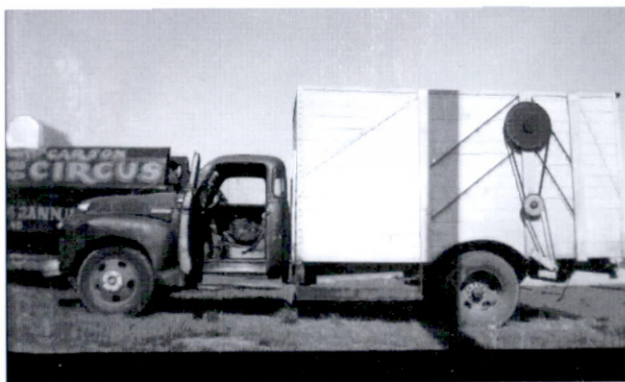
The performers were Blonda Ward family, Diane Wilson, Wanda Moore, Al and Erma Hansen, Stanfield & Company, and Jack and Ann Moore. Clowns were Happy Hanks, Henry (Toby) Eastman, Kelly Swim, Don Marcks, Mike Moore and Ted Allen.

#### 1956

The April 18, 1956 *Billboard* reported: "Hugo, Oklahoma. Tom McLaughlin, Western circus agent, has purchased an interest in the Tex Carson Circus and takes over the general agent's duties. Part owner Jack Moore continues as manager of the show, which opened April 13 at Stonewall, Oklahoma.

"McLaughlin, formerly with Kelly-Miller, Cole & Walters and other shows, has been operating a penguin show in recent seasons. Show has added three trucks and purchased a larger top, this one a 70 with three 30's. Other tops are side show and two pits.

"Personnel includes Mrs. Angela Moore, treasurer, George Bell, superintendent of concessions; Mel Hougell, concessions manager; Dorothy Turner, office, mail and the *Billboard*; John J. (Shorty) Lynn, general superintendent; Marie Loter,



Single spool canvas truck in 1956. Bob MacDougall collection.

music, Wanda Moore, front door; Ted Wilson, side show manager; J. L. (Jockey) Foster, brigade agent, with two men.

"Other staffers are John D. Foss, press; Kelley Swim, canvas; Dick Loter, side show canvas; William Rawls, painter; Mike Moore, purchasing agent; Doc Sherwin, 24 hour man; Jack Turner, legal adjuster; Blonda Ward, equestrian director; Jack McClaskey, banners; Alice Wilson, pony ride; Happy Hanks, snake show; Newman Noah, ring stock; Sabu Cherro, elephants; Donald Nelson, transport, and lights; Dianne Allen, aerial ballet; Shorty Lynn, reserves; Mrs. Blonda Ward, wardrobe; and Ed Seibert, Paul Bejano, Happy Hanks, and Kelly Monroe, clowns."

A week later, the April 28 *Billboard* provided additional information on the Carson operation: "Allen, Oklahoma. Tex Carson's Wild Animal Circus opened Friday (13) at Stonewall, Oklahoma.

"Owners are Jack Moore, who manages the show; Dores Miller, of Al G. Kelly-Miller Bros. Circus, and Tom McLaughlin, who is general agent.

"The show is enlarged, showing under a 70-foot top with a 30 and a

35-foot middle. Two rings are used and the top seats about 1,000 persons. The show travels on eight trucks.

"In the side show there are three semis carrying 15 cage compartments, and in addition to the caged animals there are an elephant, a camel and a sacred cow. Jack Turner has a gorilla show and Happy Hanks a reptile show on the midway.

"The performance includes liberty horses, pony drill, dogs, monkeys, wrestling bear, trick mule, bounding rope, ladders, webs and single traps, closing with an elephant act.

"The early weeks of the season were good in Oklahoma, but the weather in Kansas was cold. General agent Tom McLaughlin set jumps of from 30 to 50 miles daily, and Superintendent John J. Lynn was getting it up and down in good time.

"Brigade agent Foster was back on the show for a day. Another truck was added to the advance. A new pit show, midget cow, was added to the midway. Jack Turner has a new truck for his gorilla show. Another middle piece for the big top is to be delivered soon."

The May 19 *Billboard* told of business in Oklahoma: "Wilson, Kansas. Tex Carson Circus hit a week of good business in Oklahoma, but weather was cold. General agent Tom McLaughlin is setting jumps from 30 to 50 miles daily.

"Another truck has been added to the advance, while a new pit show, a midget cow, has been added to the midway and Jack Turner has a new truck for his gorilla show. Another

The Widaman, Miller and Woodcock, and show-owned elephants in 1956.







A flashy Tex Carson four wheel cage in 1956.

middle piece for the big top is be delivered soon.

"The show played Turtle Lake, North Dakota on July 5. It was the first show in several years. The elephant semi-trailer broke down and delayed the matinee which produced a near-full house. They were on the straw with an overflow crowd at night. A local reported said: 'Insufficient seating accommodations. Circus as a whole satisfactory for a small one.'"

On July 21, 1956 the Carson show lost its big top when a tornado struck the circus in Gettysburg, South Dakota. The damage was set at \$6,000.

The twister struck shortly after Moore had cut the show and the tent was empty of patrons. Chief Noah, an Oklahoma Indian, was struck by a falling center pole and was taken to the hospital.

Immediately after the wind subsided the crews put the seats up again and, through the co-operation of the town's people, the show played to a capacity audience that night behind side walls. A new top was ordered from Rogers Tent & Awning Company, Fremont, Nebraska, and was scheduled to be delivered a week later.

The show was in North Dakota after a successful run in South Dakota that didn't produce a losing day. Ed Widaman's three-elephant act joined, making a total of four bulls on the show. Dick Loter was doing single traps and clowning. Wanda Moore was working menage, web, ladder and single trapeze act.

Tex Carson played Castle Rock, Washington on August 12. Hilda Leonard, a local reporter, advised the *Billboard*: "A change of location on show day, with no advance notice.

The show drew a half house matinee and near-full at night. The main show was quite satisfactory. Circus in general much superior to Seal Bros. here in 1950. But pricing is bad. If main show should be \$1.50 then it should be advertised, and not \$1 for admission and 50 cents more for reserved seat (with all seats reserved). Cracker Jack and cotton candy at 15 cents is steep. Then it's not good to charge for the after show. Too many extra things to pay for. Advance man was a bit huffy and non-committal on information. Ads in paper should carry prices, and hours. Advance stories were too exaggerated. Local paper ran one column by 12 inch ad for two weeks and ran picture of elephant."

The September 22, 1956 *Billboard* noted: "Holyoke, Colorado. One-quarter and three-quarter houses were played here Friday (7) by the Tex Carson Circus. Show flashed seven elephants here, with three D. R. Miller's elephants, worked by Col. William Woodcock, appearing with the show for a short time along with Ed Widaman's three and Mable.

Max Starbuck of the local paper told of the show's visit to Holyoke, Colorado: "Seven elephants were taken downtown at noon. Just a fair show, three rings in evidence, but only one used most of the time. D. R. Miller's [Woodcock's] three trained elephants put on a good performance."

The October 13, 1956 *Billboard* reported: "Lubbock, Texas. Animals from the Gil Gray Circus, including elephants, two six-pony drills and mixed camels, llamas and Asiatic sheep presented by John Herriott, have joined the Tex Carson Circus. Mildred Welbes, organist, also made the switch.

"The Gray acts will replace Blonda Ward's acts, Ed Widaman's elephants and organist Marie Loter, who closed recently.

Denver City, Texas was played on October 13. A *Denver City Press* reporter stated the show drew a near full matinee and an overflow night show. He found the show to be well run, clean and presenting a good program for its size.

The circus was in Cisco, Texas on October 27. According to Bill McKinnerney, a *Cisco Press* reporter: "The show had two half houses. It was a good show for its size and the people seemed nice and friendly. The clown routine was exceptionally good."

The November 17, 1956 *Billboard* reported: "Celina, Texas. This stand was canceled by the Tex Carson Circus Friday (2) when it was found that a heavy rain the day before had made the lot too soft. The following day in Farmersville was also lost due to cold and rain. From here the circus went to its Hugo, Oklahoma winter quarters."

Total mileage for the season was 7,691.

## 1957

Early in 1957 Moore decided to change the title to Carson & Barnes.

The April 13, 1957 *Billboard* broke the news: "New title for Jack Moore's circus will be the Carson & Barnes Wild Animal Circus. This was confirmed at winter quarters last week as painting of the equipment and lettering of the new name got under way.

"The show formerly was the Tex Carson Circus. Change in name has been studied for some time, since it was felt that the "Tex" part was of no special assistance in the Western ter-

The Tex Carson liberty horses in front of their semi-trailer in 1956.





ritory the show plays.

"Earlier there was talk of calling it the Carson Circus, then several possible second names were mulled; the Barnes tag was selected."

Bill Woodcock and the three Miller and Woodcock elephants joined the show for the season. Moore went to Peru and picked up a big top he purchased from Terrell Jacobs. Canvas side show banners were discontinued, replaced by banners painted on the sides of two cage semi-trailers. Norman Anderson had the concessions and his hippo pit show on the midway.

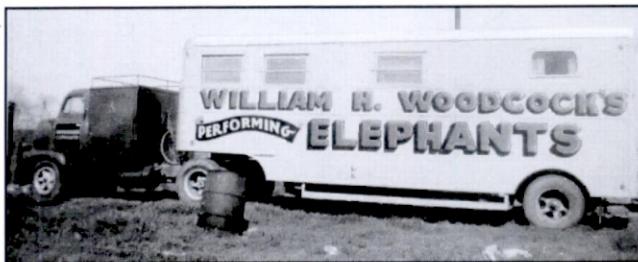
The April 29, 1957 *Billboard* told of the opening: "Atoka, Oklahoma. Carson & Barnes Circus opened its season here Thursday (10) received a matinee baptism of more water than customers, but had better than a half-house at night despite almost constant tornado warnings for the Atoka area on every commercial and police radio station from 5 p. m. until midnight. As an after thought to the weather's hijinks, the winds blew down the side show tent between the matinee and night performances. No one was hurt.

"Performance is the strongest for any of the shows taken out of Hugo, Oklahoma, quarters by manager Jack Moore, and ran one hour 45 minutes opening day. Moore reported sponsoring Lions Club had better than fair advance sale.

"Atoka airport, generally used by circuses, was under water from recent rains, but general agent Tom McLaughlin had spotted the show on a small, but well-drained new lot just south of Atoka, and no problem was encountered getting on or off lot despite rains which started at mid-morning.

"Bill Woodcock, manager of animal annex in what was previously billed as the side show, said damage to canvas by blowdown was slight. Two strong pit shows, Norman Anderson's hippo and Jack Turner's snakes, had an excellent opening day.

"Most of front yard had new art paint job and lettering, and Willie Rawls hopes to complete painting job at Joplin, Missouri, while show is



The Bill Woodcock elephant semi-trailer on Tex Carson in 1957.

still for week playing a indoor show."

From April 22 to 26 the circus played a home show in Joplin, Missouri.

The May 27, 1957 *Billboard* reported on the bad weather the Carson circus encountered in its early weeks: "Sharon Springs, Kansas. Plagued by 26 days of rain, cold weather and storm warnings, Carson & Barnes Circus has done good business at the few stands it has played in favorable weather since opening April, 18 in, Atoka, Oklahoma. One of the good dates was the Sunday (19) matinee here, which drew a capacity house in the face of a sandstorm.

"The 80-foot big top with which the show opened has been replaced by a 90 with four 30's and the side show bannerline has been replaced by two pictorial wagon fronts. Also on the midway is Jack Turner's big snake exhibit and a pony ride under the supervision of Dick Loter.

"The performance, presented in three rings, consists of Woodcock's elephants, presented by Colonel and Babe Woodcock; a single elephant act, Wanda and Mike Moore; Shelby and Babe Jackson, trampoline and bars; Jimmy and Dolly Conners, rolling globe, dogs and ponies; the Blonda Wards, bear, pony and monkey acts; Dick Loter, foot whirl, and single traps, and Wanda Moore, Darlene Loter and Babe Jackson, ladders, web and iron jaw; plus show-owned liberty act and bear and pony drills. For the first time the show is carrying a wild west concert, produced by Jim DeLock.

"Owners of the show are Jack Moore, serving as

general manager; D. R. Miller, who is also co-owner of the Kelly-Miller Circus and Tom McLaughlin, general agent. Mrs. Ann Moore is treasurer; Paul Pyle, general superintendent; John J. Lynn, superintendent of tickets; Jack Turner, legal adjuster; Dorothy Turner, ticket wagon; Ted LaVelda, side show manager; Happy Hanks, purchasing agent and 24 hour man; Walt Newman, boss canvasman; Bill Woodcock, superintendent of elephants; Johnny Tippetts, props boss; Jimmy Conners, transportation; Sabu Cherro, menagerie; Ruth Stevens, cookhouse; Mike Moore, side show canvas; Newell (Cherokee) Noah, ring stock; John Grady, side show ticket box and show painter; Frances Loter, wardrobe; John Hicks, pitchman; E. B. Crowther, brigade manager, and J. W. Foster, opposition brigade. Norman Anderson has the concessions, with Paul Zump, novelties, and Don Hollish and Jimmy Kernan, seat butchers. Anderson also has the hippo exhibit, under the supervision of Harper Hardwich."

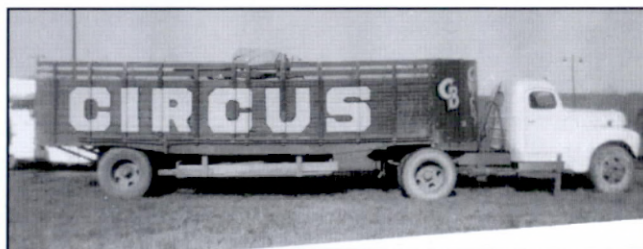
A reporter for the Kinsley, Kansas *Mercury*, where the show played on May 15 commented: "I have seen the top circuses in the country and have never seen an elephant act [Bill Woodcock's] better than this one. Rest of the show stinks."

In Saco, Montana on June 18 the contracted lot was too small for the big top, so the performance was presented in the side show top.

The show played Chinook, Montana on June 21. Zella Lunden of the *Chinook Opinion* stated: "There were three acts that were with Carson & Barnes that I thought were the best and rated some special notice.

"The best or exceptional act in the

The Carson & Barnes seat semi-trailer in 1957.





animal division were two elephants by the names of Anna May and Linda (sic) who were introduced as America's finest trained elephants. The elephants were clean and

well-trained and also knew exactly what they were supposed to do. The two stunts in their act which made the crowd go wild over them were: (1) During their act they went through all of the steps in which a barber shaves his customer. This included applying the shaving lotion, sharpening the razor on his trousers, shaving the customer, and then at first rinsing off the lather and drying the customer. (2) Then they depicted a scene in which Anna May had too much to drink in a very prominent restaurant and after creating a disturbance, staggered, and fell. The policeman was called upon and Linda arrived to make the arrest and hauled the staggering drunk off to the jail. To prove and to live up to their name the trainers put six different flags from different countries around the ring. Bypassing all other flags the elephants picked up the American flag and carried it around the center ring waving it like a banner to the tune of *Stars and Stripes Forever*.

"The clowns as usual were very good, and if it weren't for all of the people trying to sell something at this time you might have been able to hear what they were saying.

"Another very good act was the Labrarino Trio. This featured two girls from the trapeze division and another man. This act was very good and was made even better by the split second timing displayed by the performers. One demonstration of this timing was shown when as they were on the trampoline as the man was in the air, one of the girls either walked under him or did a somersault under him. Their twisters and tumbles in mid-air held most of the audience spellbound during their performance. Along with this act went the Jacksons on the steel bars. They featured one of the



Stake driver with four wheeled cage in 1957.

girls from the trampoline and the man. They went from bar to bar with the ease of walking on air. Their double somersault was the highlight of their act.

"Not to be outdone by the big top performance was the wild west show. The act that claimed star billing in this performance was a 10 year old Shetland pony by the name of Tiny. Tiny added numbers, subtracted numbers, read minds, told the ages of customers, shook his head for answers, and smiled at people. The main gripe of the people of this show was that they had thought from the price and the advertising that there were to be more than just two acts, and some of them thought they had been cheated.

"One of the main criticism of the people attending the big top performance was that there were not enough general admission seats and the cost of the reserved seats were quite expensive for anyone with any number of children. Another criticism was the prices. When advertised it said that the prices were to be slashed. 50 cents for children and 90 cents for everyone else seems to be a little high for slashed prices."

The July 1, 1957 *Billboard* reported: "Kalispell, Montana. A new big top, a 90 with three 40s, is being delivered here to the Carson & Barnes Circus. It was built by the U.

The liberty horses and their semi-trailer in 1957.



S. Tent Company, Chicago, and rushed here to replace canvas that was damaged.

"The circus opened the season with an old top and when it gave out, the show began

use of canvas formerly used on Kelly-Miller. The Carson circus was side walling for three days, while the new canvas, out of U. S. stock, was en route. The new tent is bigger than used earlier by the circus.

"At recent stands the show has been getting rain and mud, but business has been good. Saco, Montana (18), was played after the town had 10 days of rain and the regular lot was too soft. A downtown lot was substituted, but it allowed room only for the side show top, so the big show was given in the smaller tent.

Hamilton, Montana was played on July 24. A Ravalli *Republican* reporter stated: "Local people gave this show a fine reception. The afternoon attendance was held down because of agriculture workers in area, this being near harvest time. Attendance was exceptional, considering that Sello Bros. Circus only drew about 300 spectators recently."

East Helena, Montana was played on July 26. Al Gaskill of the *Independent Record* reported: "High winds caused the circus to take down the tents and cancel the performance. At night the show had 182 paid adults and 205 paid children, plus about 600 'courtesy passes,' in which the sponsor did not share."

The show played Salmon, Idaho on August 17. A reporter on the local paper said: "The show presented an outstanding program of entertainment of a caliber not seen here previous. What it lacked in quantity was more than made up in quality. Outstanding, so far as public reaction was concerned, was Col. Woodcock's elephants."

The route then took the show through Idaho, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona.

Carson & Barnes closed in Stanfield, Arizona on October 21.



Three additional stands were cancelled due poor business. It went into winter quarters in Stanfield rather than returning to Hugo.

# 1958

In January of 1958 Col. Tim McCoy, the western movie cowboy, was signed as the feature attraction of the Moore circus. McCoy had been on Kelly-Miller the previous season. He would remain with the show for four years.

Carson & Barnes newspaper ad featuring Col. Tim McCoy in 1958.

The April 21, 1958 *Billboard* told of the opening of the season: "Stanfield, Arizona. Carson & Barnes Circus, featuring Col. Tim McCoy, Western star, left winter quarters here to open its season at Casa Grande, Arizona, Saturday (5). The show is headed for California.

"Staff includes Jack Moore, general manager; Angela Moore, treasurer; Paul Pyle, superintendent; Jack Turner, adjuster; Charles R. Mason, general agent; Mrs. Mason, press; Dick Loter, side shows; Sunny Noell, reserved seat tickets; Dale Madden, musical director; Mildred Pyle, reserved seats; Frances Loter, big show ticket wagon; I. S. Douglas, Side show canvas and buyer; Jimmy Conners, electrician; Morris Horn, elephants; Kelly Swim, menagerie; Paul Anteece, water wagon; Bebra Conners, stewardess; Dixie Loter, wardrobe; Dusty Spaeth, props; Chief Noah, ring stock; Sam Price, brigade agent; Joe Sullivan, banners; Whitey Burge and Joe McFadden, billposters.

"Norman (Luke) Anderson is back with his hippo pit show and will have the concessions. Frances Anderson will be candy stand checker. Laura

## CARSON AND BARNES CIRCUS

PRESENTS  
COL. TIM MCCOY  
-IN PERSON



NOW COMBINED for  
GREATER ENTERTAINMENT

HERDS OF  
Performing ELEPHANTS  
Featuring "JUMBO III"  
LARGEST ELEPHANT IN  
CAPTIVITY

4-TON HIPPOPOTAMUS  
ONLY ONE TOURING THIS YEAR

Prancing Horses... Funny Clowns  
Tame Wild & Domestic Animals

GIGANTIC MENAGERIE

See Elephants, Rhinoceros  
Camels, Llamas, Bears, Lions,  
Leopards, Apes, etc. on Show  
Grounds at 10 A.M. FREE!

A GUARANTEED ATTRACTION!

A CLEAN SHOW!  
Bring the Family!

2 PERFORMANCES... 2 & 8 P.M.

ADMISSIONS Slashed!

Saturday, April 5

category was history of the old west. To make the program, McCoy flew to New York on Sundays while the circus was idling or making matinees only. His conversations on the air boosted Carson & Barnes and circuses generally.

"McCoy said that offers were pouring in from people and pro-

grams who want to book him for TV and other appearances.

"Jack Moore, owner-manager of the circus, was quoted as saying business for the circus increased about 40 per cent as a result of McCoy's appearances on TV.

"McCoy reported his wife was returning to their home to act as his agent in handling offers that have been coming to the show and their home."

An extensive report on the circus appeared in the June 23, 1958 *Billboard*: "Newberg, Oregon. Carson & Barnes Circus has been doing well in the west, show features Col. Tim McCoy and is owned by Jack Moore.

"Equipment includes an 80 with three 40's big top, nine show-owned trucks, numerous private trucks, three elephants, six horses, six ponies, llama, goat, midget cow, two lions, three black bears, chimp and monks. Luke Anderson's hippo show is here, as is a snake pit. Show gets 50 and 90 cents plus 60 cents on reserves."

The May 26, 1958 *Billboard* noted: "Ukiah, California. Col. Tim McCoy, feature of the Carson & Barnes Circus and winner of \$8,000 on a TV show, \$64,000 Challenge, said here last week that effect of the TV appearances has been of 'terrific impact.'

"In his third weekly appearance on the show, an opponent missed question which McCoy answered correctly. The

Anderson will have the No. 1 stand. Dorothy Turner has the big snake exhibit. Mike Navfoore has a pony ride.

McCoy will appear in the big show performance rather than concert. His personal manager will be A. A. Hanks. Additional big show performers will be the Madden Troupe, Wanda Moore, Dick Loter, Gloria Plunkett, Donna Pyle, Jimmy Conners, Darlene Loter, the Flying Mozelles, Dolly Conners, Captain Ricardo, Bertha Conners, the Eddingtons, Becky Loter, Martha Moore, Jeannie Kreil, Linda Loter, Paulette Pyle, Madeline Moore and Ernest Hungorious."

The May 26, 1958 *Billboard* noted: "Ukiah, California. Col. Tim McCoy, feature of the Carson & Barnes Circus and winner of \$8,000 on a TV show, \$64,000 Challenge, said here last week that effect of the TV appearances has been of 'terrific impact.'

"In his third weekly appearance on the show, an opponent missed question which McCoy answered correctly. The

Bob Taber provided this information in the May-June 1958 *White Tops*: "Fresh out of Arizona winter quarters the Carson & Barnes Circus entered California April 8. It gets credit for being the first of the Hugo, Oklahoma shows to ever set up on California soil.

"It played Banning April 11 and Hemet the 12th. It made a quick trip across the southern end of the state headed north via the eastern mountain route.

"Here is a show geared to make money in the towns it will play. Everything is bright with fresh paint, some canvas is new and glistens snow-white in the sun.

Travel trailer used by Tim McCoy in 1958.







"There is no excess new or old baggage around. Every performer and staff member from owner-manager Jack Moore down, doubles.

"A program that is 100% circus should please the children of all ages wherever the show stops. Some of the areas it is headed for in the Far West have had no tent circus in several years. Some of the children have never seen animals like this circus will bring to town.

"A couple of pleasing innovations are in evidence. One is the music for the acts. This is furnished in a pleasing way with lots of volume by musical director Dale Madden on the circus band organ accompanied by his son on the drums.

"The side show has no banner line. Instead several of the cages have bright animal pictorials on the sides painted in quarters. These are exposed to the midway crowds. A string of pennants overhead gives it more flash. It is unnecessary to drive a single stake to hold a pole. The pennant poles are held aloft in rings attached

The Carson & Barnes ticket wagon in 1958.

The Carson & Barnes Circus midway in 1957.

to the cage wagons. The whole front goes up in a matter of minutes.

"No cookhouse is carried. The working men are fed substantial rations cafeteria style from a cookhouse trailer. Bertha Connors in charge said she was feeding 25.

"The performance is given under an 80 foot round top with three 40 foot middles.

"The advance crew hangs date sheets and places in windows cards bearing the picture of Tim McCoy, western star featured.

"The Program: Display 1. Single elephants presented in ring 1, Dusty Spaeth; ring 2, Jack Moore assisted by Donna Pyle; ring 3 Morris Horn. 2. In the center ring The Connors (Jimmy and Dolly) juggling on the rolling globes. 3. Clowns in a fire cracker gag. 4. Swinging ladders, Lois Madden, Darlene Loter, Gloria Noel, Pat Madden. 5. Center ring Jack Moore with six liberty horses. 6. Trained dogs, ring 1, The Connors; ring 2, Lois and Pat Madden; ring 3, Bertha Connors. 7. Clowns in a hair

growing gag. 8. High school horses presented by Donna Pyle and Dale Madden in the rings and on the hippodrome track. 9. In and above the center ring a novelty number the 'clown, girl and the trapeze' Dick and Darlene Loter. This is climaxed by Dick doing his revolving bar stunt. 10. Trained animals, ring 1, 2 bears presented by Jack Moore; ring 3, trained chimp, trainer Lois Madden. 11. Clown number, 'Watch the birdie.' 12. Center ring, the young elephant presented by Morris Horn in a plank walking stunt and a few novelty turns. 13. Ring 1, 4 pony drill presented by Jack Moore; ring 3, the Connors with a pony, 2 dogs and a monkey. 14. Swinging perch. Ring 1, Pat Madden; ring 2. Here was a novelty. It was a double web with Gloria Noel and Darlene Loter performing in unison from the same crane bar; ring 3, Lois Madden. 15. Colonel Tim McCoy is introduced as the cowboy from the plains. He enters riding his horse Golden Son. He gives a demonstration of whip cracking, sharp

The Carson & Barnes light plant truck in 1958.





shooting a explanation of Indian sign language. 16. Clown Dick Loter on the track in front of the reserves with his egg gag. 17. Tight wire act in ring by the Connors duo. 18. Three elephants are presented in the center ring by Jack Knight, Morris Horn and Donna Pyle.

"The side show top, 30 x 90, is new season. The big top, while not new, does not have a patch or tear in it."

The show played California until April 22 when it went into Nevada and Utah. It returned to California for fourteen stands and then entered Oregon. By June 22 it was in Washington for an extended tour lasting until August 3. Idaho, Montana North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma were played. The show was in Siloam Springs, Arkansas on September 15. Additional stands were made in Louisiana and Texas.

The circus closed in Hugo on October 29. Mileage for the season was 8,547.

#### 1959

A major routing decision was made that would take the Moore circus east of the Mississippi River for the first time in 1959.

The January 5, 1959 *Billboard* told of Carson & Barnes activities: "Hugo, Oklahoma. Col. Tim McCoy again will be with the Carson & Barnes Circus, and his part in the show will be considerably expanded, it was announced here last week.

"Western star McCoy was with the show for a successful tour last season. Aiding the show's business were his appearances on two major TV shows, \$64,000 Challenge and This is Your Life. McCoy's section of the big show in 1959 will include Indians, stagecoach attack trick riding, sharp shooting, roping, Indian dancing and sign language. He works in the big show rather than in a concert.

"Jack Moore, manager and co-owner of the circus, returned recently to quarters here with some new animals purchased from Ringling. Included is an elephant, Josky, bringing the Carson-Barnes herd to five bulls.

"Charles R. Mason is general agent, and he said that a special type

promotion program is being worked out and that it will be an innovation in the circus field.

"Floyd (Breezy) Hill, last season with Famous Cole Circus, will be with Mason on the Carson-Barnes show this year to assist with the special promotional work.

"Jack Turner has completed work on ape and snake shows."

Further information appeared in the March 16, 1959 *Billboard*: "Hugo, Oklahoma. Col. Tim McCoy will be featured in the enlarged Carson & Barnes Circus, opening its 1959 season April 15. The show will have a new big top, marquee and side wall. One fourth of the performance will be devoted to the wild west featuring McCoy, and will be climaxed with a stage coach raid and the hanging of a horse thief, according to Jack Moore, manager.

"The enlarged side show will be fronted by two 40-foot semi-trailers with 15 wings and raise-ups on top which have the show banners painted on them. When erected, they will form a 110-foot bannerline. The side show acts will be joined by minstrels, two semi-trailers of animals, and Josky, the show's biggest elephant. Remaining animals and elephants will be housed in the menagerie.

"Capt. David Hoover's mixed wild animals and an aerial number of six ladders and four webs will highlight the program. Trumpet, trombone and drums will augment the organ for live music. Show has doubled the elephant herd to total of six.

"Floyd Hill and Harry Rawls have made new candy stands. Jack Turner has framed a new ape show to operate in addition to his snake show. The wild west portion of the regular performance and not an aftershow will feature Tim McCoy and his whip act, rifle shooting, eight-horse rope



The hippo semi-trailer in 1958.

catch and troupe of Cherokee Indians.

"Moore stated that he has been in a series of conferences with a television producer regarding new circus series for television."

In early April Richard Shipley suffered a broken collarbone, a fractured rib and another rib injury when an elephant, Dores, owned by Carson & Barnes Circus, attempted to perform a headstand on him while he was putting a chain around her leg. He was rescued by Freddie Logan, head elephant man, for the Kelly-Miller Circus. Both circuses have their elephants quartered in the Miller barn. Shipley had only recently joined the Carson & Barnes Circus and was formerly with Ringling-Barnum.

The early route took the show through Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky. It entered Indiana at Rockport on May 31.

The circus played Elwood, Indiana on June 6 where the author visited. It was a reunion with Tim McCoy, who I had known from writing a book about his wild west show that toured for a short time in 1938. It was the first time I met Jack Moore, the

A big empty stand of lithographs in 1959.







Dave Hoover on Carson & Barnes in 1959.

forty year old circus owner. Moore was very friendly and made all fans welcome on his show. I well remember Moore's Cadillac in which he carried a midget horse from town to town. The show trucks and Hoover's semi-trailer made a good flash on the lot.

Carson & Barnes played Port Huron, Michigan on July 4-5. A *Times Herald* reporter had this to say about the show: "Col. Tim McCoy's performance was very short and the persons attending the show were very disappointed. A number of the costumes used in the show were extremely dirty and did not meet the standards of the circuses that have performed in Port Huron in years gone by. The circus performers lacked the enthusiasm to put on a really good circus. Comments from persons attending the three performances put on by the circus showed that they would never again if improvements were not made in the show."

The Durand, Michigan *Express* commented about the show that played there on June 19: "We had the best circus of any in several years. Good acts, decent equipment and clean appearing. No roudyism. First good circus here for several years."

"Because several in the past have been dirty, poor acts, mangy animals, many people didn't take time to go.

The manager came to newspaper office early on show day and all advertising bills were paid."

An extensive article appeared in the July 13, 1959 *Billboard*: "Bronson, Michigan. The Carson & Barnes Circus, featuring Col. Tim McCoy Western star, and Capt. David Hoover, wild animal trainer, has been drawing good business while playing Michigan farming communities for its first tour east of the Mississippi River.

"The heavy advertising schedule and the performance are built around McCoy, who was on television shows that garnered the show nationwide publicity.

"The entire performance is fast moving and pleases the paying customers, especially the family trade. Under the helm of Jack Moore, the show emerges as a stand-out in the 80-foot top league of today's circuses.

"The midway contains a stage coach ride, Jack Turner's ape and snake pit shows, novelties, concession top, ticket wagon and side show. The show uses two semi-trailer cage wagons for its bannerline. The 40 x 80 side show is managed by Ted LaVelda, and contains Tim McCoy's horse, a zebu, guanaco, the show's four elephants, six black bears, a grizzly bear, two male lions, an ocelot, two goats; Jelly Roll Rogers' four-piece minstrel band, with two dancers; blade box; Larry Wade's fire manipulation; and a small pony and large turtle in the annex.

"Another cage wagon is spotted in the connection between the new marquee and the big top, an 80 with three 30-foot middles. A candy pitch is made before the show.

"The performance includes: Display 1. Mary Rawls and Jimmy Conners, tight wire acts. 2. Clowns, with Ted and Carrie LaVelda and Larry Wade. 3. Single bulls in end rings. 4. David Hoover, five male lions in center ring. 5. Clown walk-around. 6. Jimmy Conners, juggling and roly-boly; Rawls Family (3), trampoline. 7. Pony Drill (3), Eddie Mason. 8. Clowns, tooth pull. 9. Swinging ladders, Wanda Moore, Margaret and Susan Rawls and Holly Sidell. 10. Dogs worked Jimmy Conners and dogs worked by Bertha Conners. 11. Plank walk by small



Col. Tim McCoy on Carson & Barnes in 1959.

bull, worked by Dick Shipley. 12. Chevrolet demonstration. 13. Holly Sidell and Wanda Moore, webs. 14. Liberty horses (5) worked by Jack Moore. 15. Clowns, water gag. 16. Conners pony riding dogs and monkey. 17. Coloring book pitch. 18. Revolving ladder, Dave and Holly Sidell. 19. High School horse presented by Eddie Mason. 20. Three bulls worked by Dick Shipley and Wanda Moore. 21. Col. Tim McCoy with whip, shotgun and Indian sign language demonstrations.

"The three-piece band include George Bell, trumpet; Mike Marilia, drummer, and Leona Hill organist, show runs 80 minutes.

"Staffers include Jack Moore owner-manager; Sam Price, office; Arthur Sturmak, advertising banners; Mrs. Moore, front door; Jack Turner, legal adjuster; Harry Rawls, concession manager; Penny Moore, boss props; Jimmy Conners, electrician; Ed Mason, horses; Dick Shipley, elephants; Paul Pyle, superintendent; Emmett Hickmar, boss canvasman; Jack Turner, snake and ape, shows; Ted LaVelda side show manager; Leona Hill, mail and *Billboard* agent; Floyd Hill, special agent; Mr. Masor, general agent, and Bill Wilcox, brigade manager.

"The show moves on fifteen show-owned trucks, plus several privately



owned vehicles. It uses sponsors for ticket promotions. Heavy use of lithos is made with the show, billed as third largest. Carson & Barnes is headed for Canada."

A number of towns were played in Michigan before the show went into Canada at Sarnia, Ontario on July 6. It stayed in Ontario until it returned to the states on August 6 at Newbury, Michigan. The rest of August was in Michigan.

This after notice appeared in the Three Rivers, Michigan newspaper, where the circus played a matinee only on August 30: "A young lion trainer destined to succeed Clyde Beatty as the world's greatest performing lion trainer and a western star for two generations of Americans were the stars of the Carson & Barnes Circus here yesterday.

"Only an estimated 500 to 600 persons were on hand for the one and one-half hour show. It was one of the smallest crowds the circus has played to on its current tour which started in April and ends in winter quarters in southwestern Oklahoma in November.

"Star of the show was David Hoover, 29, of Bristol, England, who is in his first season in the United States. His five lions live in cages on a semi-trailer. A chute guides them into the iron-bar cage that fits in the center ring.

"Hoover had the lions sit up on perches mounted on the side of the cage, lie in a line in the grass in the middle of the ring, one jumped through a flaming hoop, another walked a 10-foot plank for a piece of raw meat and another was made to

The Carson & Barnes ticket trailer in 1960.



Jack Moore in 1959.

run around inside the cage and jump an obstacle.

"Hoover spent considerable time shouting at the lions to put them through their paces or keep them on their perches. His brother Henry, 22, stood by outside with a stick to come to Hoover's aid. If a lion would knock him down the others would pounce on him, according to Jack Moore, owner of the circus and ringmaster.

"Moore, cheerfully answered questions after the circus, pointed out there is no such thing as a tame lion. You can train animals but you can't tame them.' He said some trainers may have been better than Beatty 'but he was the greatest performer.' He predicted Hoover would be his successor as the world's foremost wild animal trainer.

"Col. Tim McCoy, western movie and TV star, had the final act. He is billed as the last of the plainsmen and the greatest living authority on Indian sign language. The 67-year-old performer looks more like he was still in his 40s.

"After an Australian whip cracking demonstration, he used a whip to tear a comic book page in half several times until only a half-inch square was left, light a match, cut the fire off a cigarette and fire a pistol by cracking the end of the whip on the trigger.

"In a sharp-shooting demonstration with a Winchester rifle, Col. Tim McCoy broke a number of clay balls tossed into the air at one time. Before an Indian sign language demonstration he told of a little girl saying, 'I know you, I see you on TV.' The girl's mother said, 'Yes and I used to see him every Saturday afternoon in the movies too.'

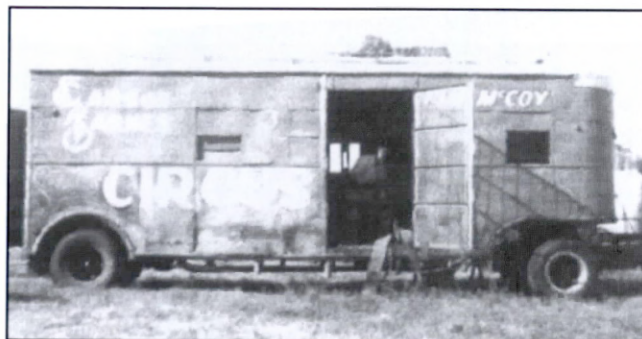
"Moore is enthused about the circus future of McCoy's youngest son, Terry McCoy, 10, who put the baby elephant through his paces in one act.

"The elephant will be a dandy when he is about 20 years old, too,' Moore said. 'He's only seven now. Elephants age is comparable to humans. They are fully grown at 20 and are considered young for show business until they are 50. The average age is 70 to 75.'

"Moore has trained bears, chimpanzees, the liberty horse act and yesterday put the show's most unusual trio--a llama, goat and mule--through the routine. The three bears are held out of the show for a few days since the female is in season. Moore pointed out that such animal acts must have one animal trained as a leader.

"Other acts well received were four ponies in a liberty act; elephants, with one standing on his head; five horses in a liberty, act with one walking on his hind legs; a pony with two

Carson & Barnes elephant semi-trailer in 1960.





dogs and a monkey; girls on a trapeze; a girl who performed a series of stunts with a glass of colored water balanced on her forehead; a horse which did a tap dance number with his front feet on a piece of plywood; the clowns; and a young man and girl on a revolving ladder.

"The circus, playing in a different city every day with two shows six days a week and only a matinee on Sunday, is well organized. With the sparse crowd, workers took down general admission bleachers in one end of the big top soon after the circus started and other general admission ticket holders got free seats in the reserved section for the last half of the show while more bleachers were dismantled.

"Soon after Hoover's lion act was completed, the chute and cage were loaded on the back of his trailer and the lion act was ready to roll on for today's performances in Walkerton, Indiana.

"Its too bad the better-than-average circus acts were seen by so few Three Rivers residents."

The trek home to quarters took the circus quickly back through Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas.

The October 19, 1959 *Billboard* told of the show's closing: "Weatherford, Texas. Carson & Barnes Circus has announced it will close on October 27 at Mount Pleasant, Texas. Overall business ran about 30 per cent ahead of last year, despite some spotty business in some areas. while the gross was up, the net was increased also and the net is expected to come out about the same as last year. A high point in the year's business was a month in Ontario, where business was big. The show is managed by Jack Moore and features Col. Tim McCoy."

Dave Price was with the show. He remembered: "In the fall of 1959 Francis Kitzman asked me to leave the Cristiani bill car in Southern California and go with him to Missouri to join Carson & Barnes, where he had been offered the car [as manager]. Bill Wilcox, car manager, and Claude Poe, lithographer, both wanted to go back home

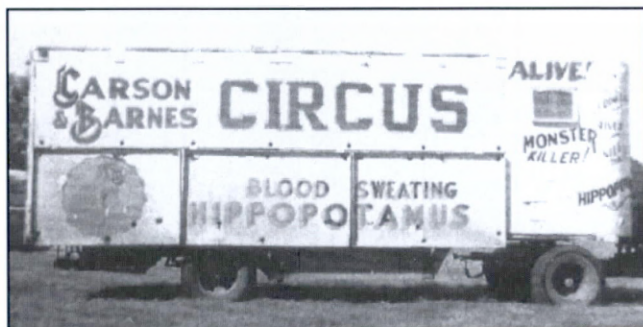


Bill poster Dave Price on Carson & Barnes in 1961. Dave Price collection.

to Hot Springs and they were letting Les Garner, a lithographer, go for some reason. The one guy remaining with us was Willis M. Johnson, the celebrated one-arm billposter. We had a great fall tour down through Arkansas, Louisiana and east Texas before going into Hugo. We managed to spend a Sunday on the lot in Timson, Texas. Jack was quite interested in our work and was very complimentary about particular empties and daubs that he remembered in various towns. At that time he was still working an act in the performance. It was either a pony drill or the bear act. I do recall Morris Horn, who was on the show, pointing out to me the original 'Dynamite the wrestling bear' that Jack had worked in the early days of the show.

"One thing I remember distinctly

The Carson & Barnes hippo semi-trailer in 1960. Circus World Museum collection.



was that during Col. Tim McCoy's talk, I noticed Jack standing over by the bandstand. McCoy's punch line was, 'So I said to the little girl, yes, I used to entertain your mother at the movies on Saturday and now I'm entertaining you on TV; and if it's the Good Lord's will, I hope someday to be entertaining your little girl.' At that point Jack started the applause and the audience was sharp enough to pick it up. That's when I realized why he had been standing there all along.

"I was on the Carson & Barnes advance the spring of 1961, when Kitzman had a larger crew, but I left in mid-year to go back to the Beatty-Cole advance, where I had been in 1960.

"What I remember most about Jack Moore was that he very strongly believed in billing the show. Several times when I was over there Kitzman would want to hire another man and Moore always agreed to it. In the early days he had used cheap paper from Neal Walters, but by the time I got there he was using a swell line from Enquirer, including those bright red 2-sheets of Col. Tim McCoy. Moore loved to see a good showing of paper and we were happy to oblige. Kitzman would have kicked our tails if we had not!"

The show moved on fifteen trucks in 1959.

## 1960

In January the *Billboard* reported that the show had scored well in Ontario in 1959 and would head back to Canada in 1960, playing Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and perhaps British Columbia. More animals were to be used, with four elephants and another semi-trailer cage. Bill and Jackie Wilcox were to have the advance billing department.

The April 4, 1960 *Billboard* told of the opening of the 1960 season: "Commerce, Texas. Col. Tim McCoy again is featured with the Carson & Barnes Circus. The circus, managed by Jack Moore, opened here Friday (25) in deep mud. It moved next to Terrell, Texas, and was late in arriving because of the



Commerce mud. Terrell afternoon show started at 3 p. m., however."

A May 1960 *Billboard* noted: "Denver City, Texas. The 20-truck Carson & Barnes Circus has been battling wind, sand, rail and hail, but has been getting profitable business in New Mexico and Texas. Show had half and near-full houses here April 30 for the fire department auspices despite cold weather.

"Col. Tim McCoy is featured on the show again this year. The Colonel is billed heavily and draws strongly. Owner Jack Moore went to Central America last winter and contracted the entire Castillo Circus, and its acts now make up much of the Carson & Barnes program. In addition he hired the Manteconn Family, which has been in the U. S. before. Additional acts are to join in a short time, Moore said.

"The circus has four elephants, various wild animals and several head of lead stock. The animals and several platform acts are in the side show top.

"Performance includes: Charles Fuller, roly-boly and two foot juggling acts; single bulls with Dick Shipley in charge; Johnny Frazier, tight wire juggling; Senior Alfonse, cloud swing, with Debbie; Lacy and Darlean Loter on single traps; clowns; Jack Moore and six chestnut liberty horses; Johnny Frazier, Lea Fuller and Martha Moore, rolling globes; Castillo's dogs, Henry Fulbright's monkeys, and Morris Horn's black bears; Shipley and elephant plank walk; concert announcement with cowboys and wrestling bear; Paulette Pyle and the Roxys, unicycle; Castillo Girls, unsupported ladder and perch; clowns; ladder act; Campa's, ponies (4); Jack Moore with llama, goat and mule, and Horn's ponies (4); Senior Mantecoon, hand balancing on high pole; clowns, webs, three menage horses; Castillo Family, iron jaw pull-up; Johnny and Martha plus Helen and Polo, trampoline turns; Carson & Barnes elephants (3), worked by Shipley and Darlelle Pratt; second concert announcement, followed by the show's feature, Tim McCoy.

"McCoy rides the track, goes into an Australian whip act, rope tricks and fancy shooting: He completes the

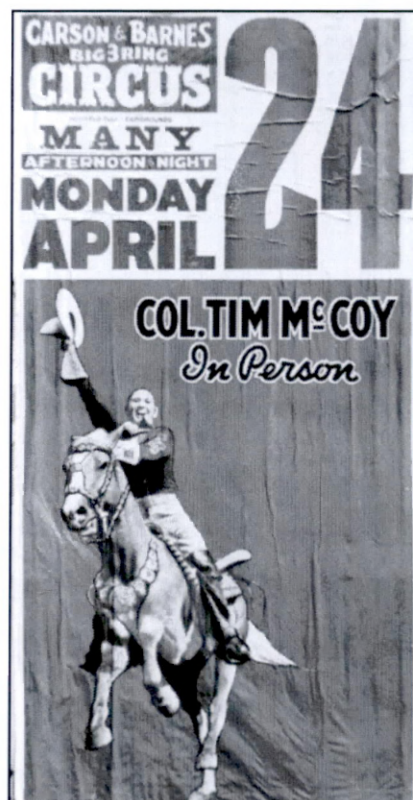
act by giving out photos and autographs.

"McCoy appears only in the big show and the concert is separate. It includes Fulbright's wrestling bear, the Wilson brothers whip act and a comedy mule.

"Show's staff includes: Jack Moore, owner-manager; Paul Pyle, general superintendent; Van Douglas, boss canvasman; Dorothy Turner, wagon; Ann Moore, front door; Harry Rawls, concessions superintendent; Chuck Fuller, side show; Jack Turner, pit show and midway; Sam Price, hippo show; Martha Moore pony ride; Connie Pratt, burgers; Lou Brock, floss; Hank Hoover, corn; Penny Moore, props; Les Brock, electrician; Jim Zimmer, transportation; Mildred Pyle, inside tickets; Mary Rawls, novelties; Oddie Cododie, jewelry; Dick Shipley, elephants; Morris Horn, ring stock; Kelly Swim, cookhouse; Happy Jack, chef; Alfonso Campa, equestrian director; Leona Hill, band mistress; George Bell, trumpet; Harry Ross, announcer."

The September 5, 1960 *Billboard*

This special two sheet Col. Tim McCoy poster was used in 1961. Dave Price collection.



reported: "Gimli, Manitoba. Carson & Barnes Circus returns to the states Sunday (4) after an extensive tour of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta since June 6.

"The show began giving daily street parades August 8 at Wynar, Saskatchewan, and owner Jack Moore has indicated he will continue parade for the remainder of the season. Free acts on the lot also are used.

"Business on the Canadian tour has been satisfactory, he said. There were occasional poor days but the general run was okay. He stated that any changes in personnel were made at his discretion to improve the show's set-up.

"Performance now runs 90 minutes and features Col. Tim McCoy. Also appearing are Walter Jennier's seal act and Miss Aerialetta, trapeze. George Bell has a six-man circus Dixieland band. Joe Sullivan handles the announcing.

"The parade utilizes new stock Moore purchased, and Sullivan has been successful with parade banners. The march includes Tim McCoy, who gets a great ovation. Mrs. Jack Moore made special parade wardrobe. Henry Fulbright, heads up the march with a sound car. Chuck Fuller is mounted on a horse for his parade marshal role.

"The concert has Henry's wrestling bear plus wild west features. Oddie Cadodie is doing okay with his pitch. The concession department was reorganized by Sullivan and is reported to be doing well."

The November 7, 1960 *Billboard* reported: "Hugo, Oklahoma. Carson & Barnes Circus is switching to promotion, type of operation and it will enlarge its layout of equipment for a tour under auspices next season.

"Co-Owner-Manager Jack Moore, together with James Allen Winters, newly appointed agent, and Harry Anderson, of Enquirer Show Print, conferred recently about details of the show's new auspices plan. Winters, now at his Austin, Texas home, will soon start contracting the new route.

"Moore plans to replace all trucks with new units. The canvas spread is to be larger, it is reported. More animals are contemplated. The circus





recently revealed a gimmick by which a new grandstand will be built and circus fans are being asked to sponsor a chair apiece.

"During the season just ended the Carson Barnes show featured Col. Tim McCoy. It added during the tour a number of show owned acts. These now include a pair of rosinbacks, four menage horses, a bear, six-horse liberty turn and a pair of pony drills."

The December 5, 1960 *Billboard* reported: "Hugo, Oklahoma. Carson & Barnes Circus has opened its promotions for early 1961 dates, and agent James Allen Winters, along with two contracting agents, has started booking engagements for the new season. This will mark the show's first season behind phone promotions.

"Winters said there will be a new line of press material, heralds, lithographs and other material. Roland Butler is aiding, he said. The show will have a press agent and 24-hour man this season, he added.

"Manager Jack Moore is building a new lighting system for the big top and it will utilize telescoping light towers.

"Winters said the Carson & Barnes fan club is growing and the show expects it to be filled by the time the 1961 season opens. The fan club provides that for a fee friends of the show may buy a chair in the new grandstand. It is then inscribed with their name and it is theirs to use at any show they might be able to attend."

#### 1961

The 1961 season opened on March 23 in Tyler, Texas. It moved into

The Carson & Barnes Circus in Elwood, Indiana on June 6, 1961. Aerial photo by Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

Louisiana on April 22 at DeRidder and into Mississippi at Port Gibson on May 1.

The March 25 *Amusement Business* told of the opening: "Carson & Barnes Circus opened its season March 23 at Tyler, Texas, on a lot adjacent to Bergfeld Shopping Center, which was the sponsor. Opening matinee was a half house, including many Hugo visitors, and the evening show played to a capacity house.

The first move was 55 miles into Palestine, Texas. The afternoon show played to a half house in warm weather and the night performance to an overflow. Huntsville, Texas, March 25, responded with two good

The Carson & Barnes midway with side show truck bannerline in 1961.

half houses despite dismal weather.

At Brenham, Texas, a Sunday afternoon-only performance drew an overflow house, with many patrons sitting on sidewall in front of the blues and others standing throughout the show.

Performance opened with tournament followed by Tinitai, rolling globe, and Alphonso Campa, unicycles. Single bull in the end rings are succeeded by Dick and Linda Loter on the revolving bar. Polo Monticon works his tight wire in center ring prior to the ladder display.

Six liberty horses were presented by Jack Moore and then the clowns, including Ernie Gabor, Chuck Fuller, Dick Loter, Don and Leota Caspers and Leopoldo Monticon, take over with the hypnotist bit. Black bears are worked by Morris Horn, flanked by Conners' dog acts. Juggling display followed with Hugo and Tinitai Padilla and then the first concert announcement is made and Col. Tim McCoy appeared. Jon Friday worked





a single trapeze followed by Susie, single bull turn. Pony drills in end rings were succeeded by Polo Monticon with his hand balancing on a high pedestal.

Clowns came in for a break-away number and then six girls went in to the air for the webs; Jimmy and Dolly Conner's riding dogs and monkey, and a llama, sheep and mule mixed act flanked a riding act in center ring featuring Chuck Fuller and Martha Moore. The second concert announcement preceded a three-ring display with the Bounding Monticons and Jumping Jormys on trampolines, opening with Olga Sanchez on bounding rope, who finished alone. Three performing elephants, presented by Captain Shipley and Gloria Noel, closed the performance.

The April 3 *Amusement Business* reported: "The Carson & Barnes Circus wild west concert, which has been enjoying good business, displays the Wilson brothers, rope spinning; Alphonso Campa, dressage horse; Slim Kelly, comedy mule; Tex Carson, trick rider, and, of course, Col. Tim McCoy with his whip-cracking.

"Leona Hill, organist; Alphonso Campa, percussion; and Leo Lacey, trumpet, play the show. Jon Friday handles announcing chores. Penny Moore is props boss. Ann and Wanda Moore handle the front door and Hank Hoover has the office wagon. Jack Moore is general manager."

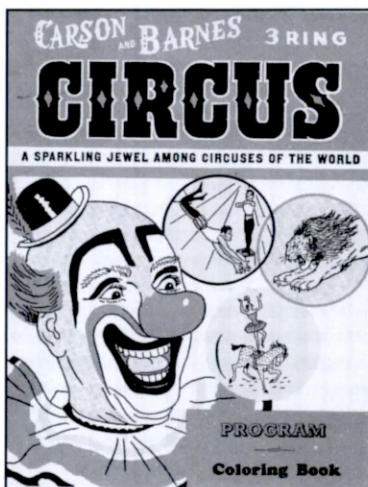
The show added a \$16,000 Bell helicopter for advance advertising and promotional purposes. Henry Fulbright brought the copter on at Brandon, Mississippi on May 2. The unit was spotted at the head of the midway and drew attention all day. It was equipped with a public address system.

The Eddy Kuhn wild animal act joined the show early in May. Kuhn was featured with lots of art in the newspaper courier. Corky Plunkett joined in Louisville, Mississippi on

May 5. The Dallas Snow sea lions joined at Savannah, Mississippi on May 9.

The early season route took the show into Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky. The show entered Indiana on June 6 at Madison.

The author visited in Knox, Indiana on June 18. The circus was using a helicopter for publicity and giving rides. The pilot took me up and I photographed a number of aerial views of the lot. For unknown reasons Eddy Kuhn was not on the show that day.



Cover of the 1961 Carson & Barnes program.

The only canvas on the lot was the big top, marquee and side show tops. There were two pit shows, and a pony sweep on the midway.

In a June 20, 1961 letter to the author from Dowagiac, Michigan, Kuhn stated: "Business stays just under the nut and I can't figure it out. We have crowds all morning long until show time and then they just disappear. Jack [Moore] went over to Kelly-Miller today and says they are doing just like us."

The circus went into Canada at Petrolia, Ontario on July 3. On October 2 it returned to the U.S. at Adrian, Michigan. It then cut quickly through Michigan, Indiana, Missouri, Kansas and closed in Antlers, Oklahoma on October 23.

#### 1962

The March 31, 1962 *Amusement Business* reported: "Carson & Barnes Circus has most rolling stock at the Choctaw County fairgrounds, Hugo, Oklahoma, being overhauled, cleaned, repaired and painted. A long semi-trailer is being made into a marquee walk-through for entering the

big show, with sleepers at each end this season for possible conversion later to offices.

"Opening is scheduled for Monday, April 16, at Paris, Texas, with a 100-mile jump the next day to Carrollton, Texas, from where the show is routed into West Texas, Manager Jack Moore told AB.

"Besides the marquee labor-saver, two others used last season are being retained and improved on. They include the two long semi-trailers of animal cross cages with banners above, which saves erecting the side show bannerline, and the long semi-trailer eliminating the cookhouse tent by holding the kitchen in the front-end plus seating for 24 persons per shift to eat in the screened truck, comfortable and sanitary in wet, windy, cold or dry weather alike. The circus expects to serve less than 50 in the cookhouse this season, about two sittings."

The April 28 *Amusement Business* reported on the opening: "Carson & Barnes Circus opened its season to strong business on a muddy lot at Paris, Texas, Monday (16), getting a half-house matinee and better than three-quarter at night under their new white big top with red and blue trim. Tent is a 100-foot round with three 40-foot middles.

"Performance is varied and strong, running two hours at opening stand, but manager Jack Moore hopes to cut this a half hour and still keep in all acts. Forty-one people worked in performance. Wardrobe, mostly new, was beautiful.

Charlene and Eddy Kuhn on Carson & Barnes in 1961.





"Elephants helped get the last of show trucks off the Paris lot at 4:30 a. m. Tuesday for the 120-mile jump to Carrollton, a suburb of Dallas, where pole wagon didn't arrive until nearly 2 p. m. Shorty Lynn and Corky Plunkett with their canvas crew had top up and seats set for matinee starting at 3:30. Audience was quite light at the Carrollton matinee with less than a half house at night.

The show moved west and entered New Mexico at Portales on April 30 and was in Arizona at Holbrook on May 6. By May 12 it was in California at Needles.

Barstow was played on May 14. Douglas Lyon drove 150 miles from Los Angeles to visit the Carson & Barnes Circus. His very complete report appeared in the January-February 1963 *Bandwagon*. Portions of the article follow.

"Barstow, being located in the desert area, was another one of those windy cities that Carson & Barnes was so used to playing.

"By 11:30 everything was set up and ready to go for the 2:30 matinee, and the entire layout set a very nice appearance on the lot as a whole.

"The big top is new this season, manufactured by the U. S. Tent and Awning and is a 100 ft. round with three 40 ft. middle pieces. It is a white big top with red and blue trim with blue striped side walls. The menagerie and side show tent was a four pole 30 by 90 top with square ends. The show owned a marquee for it, but it wasn't used at Barstow because of the wind. The only other canvas located on the lot was the small Big Jess [fat man] pit show top, and a circular canopy over the pony ride, both of these located on the midway.

"The performance was presented in three rings, with the seating being both plank and chairs. The blues and the backside both consisted of planks 6 high. The reserve section (front) consisted of 5 rows of 7 chairs to each section of 35. It is interesting to note that all of the white chairs in the reserve section were labeled with the

names of various circus fans who had contributed to the show and had bought a seat for the season.

"All of the show owned stock was exhibited in the menagerie and side show tent, admission going for 35 cents a head. The menagerie consisted of five Indian elephants: Jenny, Mabel, Josky, Wanda and Susie. Wanda is a baby purchased in March, 1962, from Jungleland (World Jungle Compound) in Thousand Oaks, California. Josky was on the Sells-Floto show from 1923 to 1932, then to Al G. Barnes from 1933 to the combination of Barnes and Ringling in 1938, and then on the Ringling show from 1939 to 1958, when she was sold to Carson & Barnes.

"Jenny came on the Kelly-Miller



Card issued to circus fans who bought a 1961 season ticket. Col. Ed Smith collection.

show in 1949 and then went to Carson & Barnes in about 1958.

"Mabel, like Josky, is a veteran trouser. She was purchased by William P. Hall in 1925 and was broken by Al Langdon. She was with Hall until the end of 1933 and then was with Bud Anderson for four years; then with Parker and Watts for 1938-1939. Watts had her for a couple of years and then she was with Hamid-Morton for about ten years. Kelly-Miller obtained her in 1951 and in 1953 she was with Cole & Walters. Since that time she has been with both Tex Carson and Carson & Barnes Circuses. Susie has been on the show since 1957.

"Also located inside the tent were 3 llamas, 2 zebus, a zebra, a Asia sheep and three cage trucks.

"Two of these semi cage trucks No.

30 and No. 31, had five cages in each, and used with a dual purpose. Besides the cages, the two trucks were located along the front of the tent and also served as the banner-line, one on each side of the entrance to the tent. Located across the back side of the menagerie was the other cage semi, No. 50.

"The cages contained the following animals: a striped hyena, puma or mountain lion, 2 male lions, Himalayan bear, cinnamon bear, Russian brown bear, ocelot, macaque monkey, a bear cub (probably black bear) and three Rhesus monkeys.

"The side show acts included a fire eater and nails by Ernie Gabor, and Punch and Judy and magic by Dick Loter. Loter also gave the side show bally on the platform out front. The elephants were handled by Newman 'Cherokee' Noah.

"Beside the menagerie and side show on the midway, there was also three pit shows. Next to the side show was a semi hippo walk threw which was run by Sam Price. On the left side of the midway was a pony ride under a red and white circular canopy with four ponies in it and next was the Big Jess Fat Man pit show, which was run by Al Hill. Next was the ticket office, and then the snake, gorilla, tropical birds and penguin pit show semi, under Henry Fulbright, then came the popcorn and snow cone concessions. In the middle of the midway was also located a midway diner and a cotton candy concession. All of the pit shows and the pony ride went for 25 cents each.

"Located at the far end of the midway was the show's new marquee walk-through, similar to that of Kelly-Miller. It was built upon a semi trailer with sleepers at each end this season for possible conversion later as offices. An outstanding feature of the marquee, is that on either side of the entrance way are pictorial paintings of the Two Hemispheres bandwagon and the Lion and Gladiator tab.

"Located in the back yard was a long silver semi which eliminated the



cookhouse tent by holding the kitchen.

The truck inventory for the show was: (-s-denotes tractor and semi trailer.)

- No. 11-s-Power plant
- No. 26-s-Elephants
- No. 27-s-Elephants
- No. 30-s-Cage and side show bannerline
- No. 31-s-Cage and side show bannerline
- No. 32-s-Hippo pit show
- No. 33-s-Poles
- No. 36-s-Marquee and sleeper
- No. 37 Mechanic's truck
- No. 40-s-Seats
- No. 50-s-Cages
- No. 54 Canvas loader (ex-Wallace & Clark)
- No. 55-s-Snake pit show
- No. 69 Rest room trailer
- No.-s-Cookhouse (silver)
- No.-s-Concessions
- Midway diner (trailer)
- Ticket office (trailer)
- Stake driver (red)
- Cat with stake driver attached
- Water wagon
- Flat bed single wheel trailer to carry cat
- Small cross cage with two honey bears (former Capt. Eddy Kuhn)
- Band organ truck
- Personnel bus (silver)
- Personnel bus (blue)
- No.-s-Horse truck
- No. -s-Horse truck

"The ends of the trucks were painted white, with a large red stripe down the center, and Carson and Barnes Circus lettered in black and white.

"Tickets for the big show are sold according to location of the seats in the tent. The blues or ends go for \$1.00 for adults and 50c for children, then ring center (back side) at \$1.50 for adults and 75c for children, then box chairs for \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children.

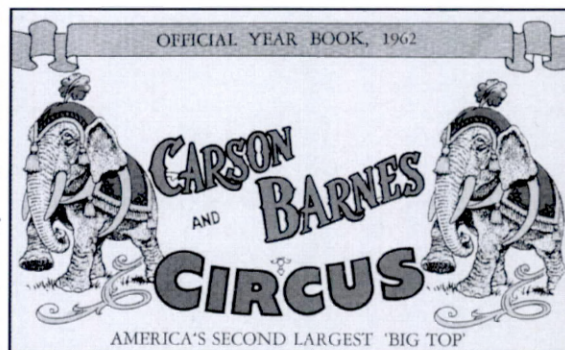
"The performances are scheduled at 2:30 and 8:00 P. M. and are given in three rings. The performance for the 2:30 show at Barstow was given as follows: 1. Spec 'La Fiesta' consisting of mounted rider (man); 3 people walking; 2 llamas; 3 people walking; 2 girls on horseback; 4 girls walking; 1 mounted rider (girl); 4

ponies; 2 people walking; 4 elephants (With Darlene Loter riding Josky); 5 clowns. 2. Garcia Troupe, roly-boly; Wrights, Roman rings; 'Bo Bo' (Dick Loter), horizontal bar; 3. Flying Murillos, trapeze casting bar. 4. Clowns. Onions and his clown band. 5. High school horses, Billie Smith on Black Beauty; Don Ricardo on Golden Sun; Robert Grubbs on Starnight. 6. Aerial display, ladders. Miss Rose, Miss Rebecca, Miss Darlene, Miss Patricia, Miss Linda and Miss Flo. 7. Elephants, Susie and Mabel in end rings. 8. Clowns-firehouse. 9. Single trap 'Fransua.' 10. Concert announcement Rex King. 11. Camoas, juggling; Castillo troupe, foot juggling. 12. Bareback Riding Darlene. 13. Animal acts. Elephants Mabel, Susie and Jennie by Richard Shipley; 3 dog acts. 14. Balancing. Manuel, hand balancing; Florence & Grislda, perch. 15. Aerial display. Miss Rosa, cloud swing; Gloria, iron jaw; Miss Patty, swinging perch. 16. Horses. Shetland ponies; liberty horses, Bob Grubbs; Shetland ponies. 17. Clowns-boxing. 18. Aerial display. Miss Linda, web; Miss Carmelita, web; Miss Meriam, trap; Miss Rose, web; Miss Becky, web. 19. Clowns walkaround. 20. Plunkett troupe, trampoline, featuring Corky.

"The performance was followed by a wild west concert which starred Rex King. Performers included Bob Grubbs, rope; Bill Wood, rifle; Linda Barnes, trick riding; Jack Fulbright and Boots Madden. Tickets for the concert were 25c each.

"Clowns include Charlie Boas, Ernie Gabor, Dick Loter, Castillo and Lou Walton.

The only route book published by Carson & Barnes was issued for the 1962 season.



"Barstow being a hard city for billing, the paper consisted mainly of small window cards and date sheets, with a few spots using pictorials."

The circus remained in California until it went into Oregon at Brookings on June 12. By June 29 it was in Washington at Longview. July 30 to August 28 Carson & Barnes played the Canada Centennial Celebration at Victoria, British Columbia. Going back into Washington the route took the show to Idaho, Montana, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas where the show closed in Bonham on October 28. The total mileage for the season was 9,531.

The closing was reported in the November 10 *Amusement Business*: "Despite a brutal closing week in Texas, manager Jack Moore kept his strong program virtually intact until the final show on October 28 in Bonham.

"Little change in the line-up was reported during the season, characterized as 'spotty,' which took the show from the Rockies to the West Coast and from California north to British Columbia. Highlight was eight performances bought outright for the Greater Victoria (B.C.) Centennial in Royal Athletic Park, and the show ended the season with comfortable jumps across Texas en route to winter quarters at Hugo, Oklahoma.

"Acts with Carson & Barnes included the Garcia troupe, roly-boly; the Wrights, Roman rings; BoBo (Dick Loter), horizontal bar; Flying Murillos, trapeze; Don Richards (Dale Madden, Jr.), dressage; Billie Smith and Bob Grubbs, menage; Linda Carmelita, Rose and Darlene, Spanish webs; Mimi, single trap; Grubbs liberty horses; three elephants, worked by Col. Richard Shipley and Wanda Hoover; Francisco, trapeze foot balance; dogs, worked by Rosie, Patty and Gloria; Riding Romanos, bareback; Manuel, hand balancing; Florence and Griselda, perch act; Corky Plunkett troupe, trampoline; clowns and a Western display finale. The Grubbs liberty horses and attendant acts were cut in the last week of the season."



# STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

## The Pogey O'Brien Interval, 1874-1875

By William L. Slout

*This paper was presented at the 1999 convention of the Circus Historical Society.*

The 1874 circus under P. T. Barnum's name went out under new management because the regular Barnum team was occupied with another venture. Although we have no intention of fully particularizing this change of direction--our main interest here being with the circus--a brief description might prove beneficial.

The Barnum organization took a bold turn this year by launching P. T. Barnum's New Roman Hippodrome, which was not a circus. There were no center rings as we know them. There were no clowns and but a few of the variety performances recognizable as circus acts. Instead, there was a large hippodrome track for racing horses, camels, elephants, and most anything else with legs. And with the track and the infield created by its oval, there was space for huge spectacle displays.

In his autobiography, Barnum referred to a "long-cherished plan of exhibiting a Roman Hippodrome, Zoological Institute, Aquaria, and Museum of unsurpassing extent and magnificence." His propensity for topping his previous achievements, strengthened by the financial success of the 1873 circus tenting season, supported the acceptance of such a scheme.

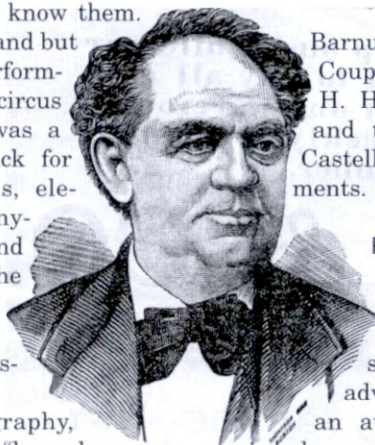
Plans for his last "crowning effort" were set in motion in the fall of 1873. Barnum left for Europe in September and while there visited all the zoological gardens, circuses, and public exhibitions wherever he went, acquiring various novelties and valuable ideas. He then moved on to England where on January 2 he con-

tracted with John and George Sanger to purchase duplicates of the entire wardrobe and paraphernalia connected with the "Congress of Monarchs," an impressive spectacle that had been exhibited at Agricultural Hall, London, some years earlier.

Meanwhile, Coup and Hurd leased the New York and Harlem Railroad Company property in New York City at Fourth Avenue and 26th Street that had been left vacant in 1871 by the opening of Grand Central Station at 42nd Street, and set about constructing a suitable venue. When the place opened to the public on April 27, 1874, the list of officialdom

included P. T. Barnum, proprietor; W. C. Coup, general manager; S. H. Hurd, superintendent and treasurer; and Dan Castello, director of amusements.

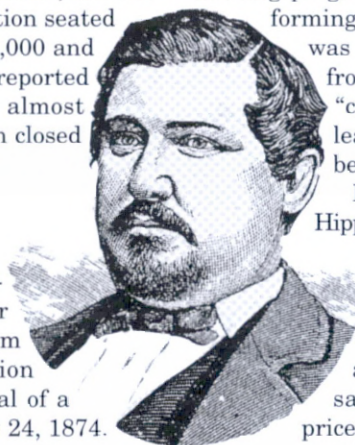
P. T. Barnum



The venture got off to a successful start. Newspaper advertisements claimed an average daily attendance of 20,000, with thousands unable to gain admission for the evening performances.<sup>1</sup> This may have been an overstatement; but the place, which on completion seated somewhere between 10,000 and 12,000 spectators, was reported to have been filled almost nightly until the season closed on August 1.

John V. O'Brien.

The Connecticut Legislature issued a charter for the P. T. Barnum Universal Exposition Company, with a capital of a million dollars, on July 24, 1874.



Barnum was recorded as president; W. C. Coup, as manager. Under the aegis of this enterprise, the immense Roman Hippodrome, with its aggregate of some four to five hundred men, women, and children, four hundred horses, and an assortment of camels, elephants and other quadrupeds, went on tour to introduce its unparalleled marvels to audiences outside of New York City, namely Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati.

An advance crew of carpenters and other specialists preceded the show by several days in order to level the ground, prepare the hippodrome track and construct a tiered amphitheatre around it. The practice of erecting a wooden structure for seating at each stand in advance of arrival had been instigated by Barnum's circus managers to some degree the previous years.

Following the Hippodrome's final performance on October 24, the weather being too cold to continue on to St. Louis and Chicago, the outfit was shipped back to New York City. All in all, the season had offered the most luxurious show of pageantry ever attempted on this continent. The various races contributed to a continuous excitement throughout the entirety of the matinee and evening programs. The claim of performing to 20,000 people a day

was not disturbingly far from the truth. Barnum's "crowning effort," at least for this year, had been a crowning success.

Embarking on the Hippodrome project meant leaving idle a successful circus with accompanying equipment too new and too valuable to sacrifice at auction prices. The solution was to



lease the title and equipment to another showman, along with the Barnum curiosities and many of the employees. The new manager of P. T. Barnum's Great Traveling Museum, Menagerie and World's Fair for the seasons of 1874 and 1875 was John V. "Pogey" O'Brien.

The choice of O'Brien to carry on the three year old Barnum circus name has raised more than a few eyebrows over the years. Skeptics have asked why a man of Barnum's stature would select a partner of such questionable integrity, a man whose legacy is the image of a scoundrel, who throughout a lengthy career in management developed a notoriety for dishonesty, coarseness, and a tolerance for grifters, qualities consistently purported by circus people and circus historians. And we have accepted them as representing the true nature of Pogey O'Brien. For example, C. G. Sturtevant wrote: "... he took mean advantage of his people, in small ways to mulct them of money they had due. He was also notorious in beating everyone he possibly could with whom he came in contact. His shows were a paradise for grifters, not in the ordinary sense of the word, for at the time many others carried grift with some discrimination, but on the O'Brien shows it was wide open. Gamblers, thieves and all manner of thugs were carried, and had protection both by fixers and a celebrated gang of canvasmen known as the 'Irish Brigade,' which were recruited with regard for their ability and love for a fight. This gang of iron fisted bruisers never lost a decision in the numerous clemes the show got into with an outraged public."<sup>2</sup>

D. W. Watt, treasurer for the Forepaugh circus in the 1880s, accused O'Brien of knowing "little about the Ten Commandments." Chindahl, in his book, *The History of the Circus in America*, stated: "If John V. Pogey O'Brien deserves mention in a history of the American circus, it is because he was a notable example of the dishonesty toward both employees and the public which characterized many shows. Gamblers and thieves became integral parts of his activities."<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, all of the above,

Will Exhibit at Norristown on Wednesday, October 29th.  
Positively the Last Show of the Season.

## JOHN O'BRIEN'S Six Shows!

CONSOLIDATED AND EXHIBITED UNDER  
Six Separate Tents!



For One Single Price of Admission,  
ONLY 25 CENTS TO ALL SIX TENTS.

JOHN O'BRIEN TO THE PUBLIC:

First Annual Tour Under the New Regime—12 Years as Manager and Proprietor.

Being determined that the public, by whose generous patronage, during my earlier and more humble career, I have been so long encouraged and sustained, shall have the full benefit of my accumulated experience and fortune, I have concluded not only to consolidate all of my Six Great Shows into One, but exhibit them also Three Times a Day, in a Separate Colossal Tent. I am fully aware that to do this will require a considerable sacrifice and a vast amount of extra labor, but I shall try to win in this New Regime, upon the absolute merit and magnitude of my immense consolidation, which is twice as large as any other concerns in the country, of giving free and complete exhibitions each day. I propose to give the public a combination of

### ATTRACTIONS, NOVELTIES AND RARE CURIOSITIES.

Is my MUSEUM, MENAGERIE, CIRCUS, GYMNASIUM EXHIBITION and COLLOSSUS OF NATURAL HISTORY, having no parallel in the annals of the show business. I intend to transport this whole vast enterprise throughout the country by wagons, stopping principally in

### CITIES AND LARGE TOWNS.



FOR THIS PURPOSE I SHALL USE NEARLY

## 800 MEN AND HORSES.

John O'Brien newspaper ad used in 1873. Pfening Archives.

although consistent in their charges, list no sources.

History has left us with little personal knowledge of this man O'Brien. We know he was born on January 29, 1836, the son of an Irish stone mason and resident of Frankford, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia. Beyond that, only two accounts by contemporaries supply us with most of what else we know, both written by former employees, one being submitted to the *New York Clipper* in 1872 by Birkit Clarke, who was O'Brien's treasurer the previous year.<sup>4</sup> Stuart Thayer speculates that some of what Clarke wrote was designed to ingratiate him with O'Brien as a means of future employment. I leave that to

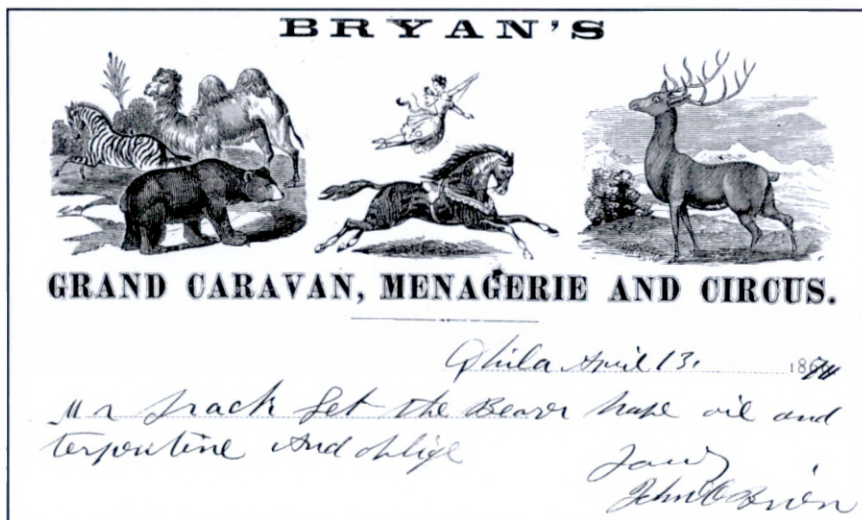
the reader to determine.

Clarke tells us that O'Brien's education was acquired more from physical combat with his school mates than from an open text book. From such lack of devotion to learning, father O'Brien concluded that his son was more fit for labor than scholarship; so he put him to work mixing plaster. The job lasted until one day a larger boy threw an apple core at him, which ignited a bit of serious fisticuffs with John coming off the winner, only to receive a disheartening thrashing from his father. This may have been the catalyst that caused his running away from home.<sup>5</sup>

The mature O'Brien, Clarke recalls, was a man free with everybody—"a king or a canvasman would be all the same to him." He was always in good humor and his fund of anecdotes was endless. He was an enthusiastic "kiddier," then, after committing some such trickery, would explode with laughter.<sup>6</sup>

The other contemporary from whom we learn about O'Brien is George Conklin, who left us with the best picture of him in his book *The Ways of the Circus*.<sup>7</sup> Conklin joined on with O'Brien in 1867 and was with him for several years, eventually becoming the show's animal man. He obviously knew Pogey better than most of his contemporaries. In *The Ways of the Circus* he described the man as "rough and illiterate, yet with a large stock of native shrewdness." He remembered him as being fat and good natured, but a rough and tough character, unable to read or write, but, as he termed it, "hell on figures." He suffered from asthma which revealed itself in his wheezing voice and peculiar laugh and required his sleeping in a chair instead of a bed. He touched neither tobacco nor hard liquor. He found pleasure in attracting attention through his opulent attire, usually appearing in a frock coat, pants made of blue broadcloth, and a velvet vest. For hiring performers he changed to a double-breasted vest with two rows of buttons inlaid with diamonds, from which hung a large watch chain with each gold link set in the precious stones as well.<sup>8</sup> He was also very close with money. Press agent Charles H. Day recalled





Bryan letterhead used by O'Brien in 1869. Pfening Archives.

that whenever O'Brien stayed in New York City, he slept on a sofa in the lobby of the St. Charles Hotel to save a dollar.<sup>9</sup> This miserly quality was both an attribute and a weakness.

At barely seventeen O'Brien became a stage driver in Philadelphia which lasted for a half-dozen years, during which time, through a life of frugality, he bought horses on the side. He then moved to Washington, D. C., where he drove a stage between that city and Alexandria, Virginia, and ultimately became owner or part-owner in the line. He entered the circus business in 1861 by renting horses to Gardner & Hemmings and going along as boss hostler. The next year he owned one third interest in the show and retained it until he sold it to James E. Cooper a few weeks into the 1863 season. He then organized his own show that year, Bryan's (sometimes referred to as Brian's) National Circus with Mrs. Dan Rice, for touring in Pennsylvania and New York state. Clarke states that "from all I have heard regarding the concern, it must have been a very 'light waisted' affair."<sup>10</sup> But, let it be noted, the show made money.

In 1864 O'Brien took out the Tom King Excelsior Circus with the leaper Tom King as the star. This was a partnership between O'Brien and Adam Forepaugh, with King being Forepaugh's man on the lot. It came about because Forepaugh had earlier

supplied show horses, but when the payment came due he was forced to accept a share of the circus as settlement. After a route through Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan, King left the show in Port Huron on August 20 because of a disagreement. On September 3 a card appeared in the advertising columns of the *Clipper*: "Having withdrawn from the associate management of O'Brien & King's Excelsior Circus, I take this method of requesting Mr. O'Brien to remove my name from the top of the bills. . . . I will give him twenty days from this date to do this. There are several honorable men in the Company, but I am sorry I ever associated myself with an omnibus driver Tom King."<sup>11</sup>

This appears to be the first negative imprint on the O'Brien reputation as a manager.

The O'Brien-Forepaugh partnership continued in 1865, when in April of that year the two men purchased the Jerry Mabie menagerie, consisting of twelve cages, two elephants and other animals. It was delivered at Twelfth and State Streets, Chicago, on the very day of the assassination of President Lincoln. This became the Dan Rice Menagerie.

The managers eventually found they could not get along, so the partnership was dissolved after the 1865 season. According to Conklin, they divided the property by each man alternately selecting a wagon or an animal or some piece of equipment, a process that continued throughout the entire circus inventory.<sup>12</sup> For the 1866 season O'Brien leased his ani-

mals to Yankee Robinson under George W. Sears' supervision, but there is no evidence that he took a circus on the road. Forepaugh went out again under the Dan Rice title.

With the split, O'Brien increased his circus activity by acquiring more circus property. In 1867 he organized Whitby & Co., which included a menagerie, while again Yankee Robinson leased the so-called Mabie animals. In 1868 he owned both Bryan's Circus and Menagerie and DeMott & Ward's. In 1869 he operated Bryan's again, as well as Campbell's Circus and Menagerie, the latter managed by Hyatt Frost. These two shows were out again the following year with Campbell's under the management of James DeMott. His fifty cage menagerie that year was the largest in the country. Throughout these years he amassed so much property that in 1871 he put four outfits on the road, each with a menagerie--John O'Brien's, Sheldenberger's, Hardenberger & Co.'s, and J. E. Warner & Co.'s. In 1872 he had three shows O'Brien's, J. E. Warner & Co.'s, and Kleckner & Co.'s.

O'Brien had a circus under his own name in 1873, which, perhaps in imitation of Barnum's Great Traveling World's Fair, was called John O'Brien's World's Fair on Wheels. The show exhibited under six round tops of canvas, five of which were described as "the worse for wear." The performing tent, however, was new. The menagerie was still the feature attraction, being made up of thirty-five cages. He also had interest in the Rice, Ryan & Spalding Circus that year. By now he was looked upon as a wealthy man and one of the most successful circus proprietors in the United States.

When he became associated with Barnum he was young and experienced in the business, having been in management for ten years, longer than either Coup or Castello before they teamed with Barnum in 1871. In Clarke's 1872 article he was described as having a remarkable knowledge of show business. He possessed an elegant mansion in Frankford, Pennsylvania. Two blocks away his animal buildings covered an acre of ground and his nearby farm contained 500 head of stock. He





Admiral Dot, a well known midget on the show. Pfening Archives.

was a perfect picture of an energetic and successful entrepreneur. And, with his large collection of animals, like Barnum, he was a man more interested in exhibition than performance. So, O'Brien in 1874, at age thirty-eight, would have been considered nothing less than an experienced and successful showman, capable of succeeding the team of Coup, Castello, and Hurd.

But if his reputation for dishonesty has merit, and one has to believe it does, what justified Barnum's association with him? Barnum, who was so sensitive about establishing his own image as a paragon of virtue and the circus under his name as a great moral institution, would never have accepted a partnership with someone of what we now consider an unseemly reputation. I can only conclude that it had not become a factor by 1874.

I refer to Clarke again. "Wherever he is known his word is equivalent to his note," Clarke attested in 1872, and "in excellent health, with ample wealth, and with an interesting family about him, he has all that can make a man happy in this world."<sup>13</sup> As late as 1880, George H. Batcheller and John B. Doris, who had been associated with O'Brien enterprises for eleven seasons, entered a card of appreciation in the New York *Clipper* which read in part: "In all transactions of whatever nature, we have always found you to be just and hon-

orable, while large experience and sound judgment have been of incalculable benefit to us."<sup>14</sup>

O'Brien's negative image, a result of cumulative improprieties, must have been formed after Barnum's selection of him as a partner.

Little has been made of the two years of O'Brien's tenure under the Barnum title. Arthur Saxon, the pre-eminent Barnum biographer, makes slight mention of it; and Barnum, who was far more attentive to the fortunes of the Great Roman Hippodrome, was equally remiss in his autobiography. We know that, unlike the 1873 Barnum circus, this show moved on wagons but maintained the familiar elements of the previous circuses under the Barnum name. The two-ring format, originated by Coup in 1872, remained. The main tent seated some 5,000 spectators. The Barnum autobiography was still on sale and still reduced to \$1.50. The customary Barnum logo appeared on most of the advertising and Barnum's presence was felt even in his absence: "The happy face of Phineas Taylor Barnum has smiled so benignly upon *Observer* patrons during the past fortnight," the *Utica Daily Observer* read, "that all have anxiously awaited the advent of his traveling world."<sup>15</sup> And the bills spilled out the typical Barnum line: "The Great Object Teacher of the Masses," "With Over 1,000 Assistants, Now Presenting 100,000 Life Lessons." The level of ring artistry was on a par with most of the major circuses. The museum and menagerie were still featured over the ring performance. Many of the curiosities of the previous years were on exhibit--Admiral Dot, the Fiji Cannibals, a Circassian lady, the talking machine, etc. James L. "Doctor" Thayer, the clown and ex-circus proprietor, represented Barnum's interest with the show.

The ring performances were under the equestrian management of James Cooke, the well-known English jester. The leading equestrians were James Melville and sons and Lucille Watson. They were supported by Arthur Nelson and his family of acrobats, the clowning and stiltwalking Jerry Hopper, and the educated goat, Alexis. In addition,



Zoe Meeleke, the Circassian lady with the Barnum show.

Herr Lippard showed his mastery over some number of "brute actors"--a collection of Phi Beta Kappa ponies, dogs and monkeys. Dan Castello's trained horse, Senator, and his comic mules, Pete and Barney, having no place with the Hippodrome, were part of O'Brien's lease, as were the museum wagons and many of the cages and their contents.

The show confined its 1874 tour to the Northeast. After opening in Frankford, there were a number of stands in New Jersey and, for a few weeks in mid-July, in Canada; but most of the season was devoted to Pennsylvania and New York state. One might add that for both the 1874 and 1875 seasons O'Brien did not exhibit in New York City or its environs as had the previous circuses under Barnum's name. Rather, he stayed shy of the major cities as well as the areas in which the Roman Hippodrome was routed.

The 1875 season opened at Washington, D.C., for a week beginning April 12, which turned out to be the only major stand. The arenic program featured the carrying act of Martinho Lowande and his young son, Tony; Madame Elisa Dockrill, the beautiful equestrienne; the gymnastic Leslie Brothers; and the clown, William H. Porter. Most of the season was spent visiting the medium and smaller size cities in Pennsylvania and Ohio, with a few



dates in New Jersey and Kentucky. Norristown, Pennsylvania, closed the tour on October 21 before the show went into winter quarters at Newark, New Jersey.

The season over, the Barnum/O'Brien relationship was terminated and the animals and equipment from both units were put up for auction. Unfortunately for O'Brien the Panic of 1873 lasted until 1878, and not only was business bad, he lost \$9,400 in the collapse of the Jay Cooke bank. The lease ended on a sour note and Barnum was forced to sue for a \$14,000 shortfall. To make matters worse, Adam Forepaugh took Barnum to court in 1879 for the value of the property sold as belonging to O'Brien--horses, wagons, cages, etc.--claiming the property was really his.

Elsie Dockrill, rider with Barnum in 1875.



The Barnum name did not drawn as well as in previous years. A scribe for the *Cleveland Herald* explained it by stating: O'Brien "tried to make the public believe that he had a 'genuine Barnum,' but it was like the equine quadruped which put on the lion's skin--the ears were too long."<sup>16</sup>

The second year of P. T. Barnum's Great Roman Hippodrome also ended in failure. The attempt to operate the show similar to a one night stand circus was a mistake; the large and cumbersome outfit was just too expensive. With this the Coup and Barnum partnership came to an end. It has been suggested that Coup's departure was provoked by some animosity between the two. Coup never made a public statement to confirm this; and if there was resentment it was probably of minor concern. Still, there were contemporary rumors. An item in an 1875 *Cleveland Herald* suggested that Coup had seen impending trouble two years earlier and "tried several times to slip out of the concern."<sup>17</sup> Such inferences may have caused Barnum to make the following qualification in his advance courier of 1876: "In reply to many

inquiries regarding my friend and late manager, Mr. W. C. Coup, I wish to say, that having labored hard and "made his pile," he preferred to retire, at least for a season. Meanwhile our friendship is uninterrupted. Mr. Coup is an efficient manager and a scrupulously honest and upright gentleman."<sup>18</sup>

The Barnum/O'Brien partnership experienced problems and a general lack of success in management from the outset. For example, a sojourn into Canada during mid-summer of 1874 was a financial disaster. In retrospect, the Great Traveling World's Fair was merely the usual O'Brien offering, barely held aloft by Barnum's name and famous logo. And Barnum, who during his first three years in circus management was so instrumental in exciting immense public interest, was more involved in promoting his Roman Hippodrome than his circus. This was reflected by the local press, which devoted great splashes of ink extolling the wonders of the former and gave only superficial attention to the latter.

Conklin has written that O'Brien owed salary to "Doc" Thayer at season's end, but when Thayer asked for his money, he responded with, "Get it out of Barnum." This refusal to pay up would prove costly. While the show was in Canada in 1874 O'Brien had replaced his run down horses with fresh stock. On his return to the United States he did not report the exchange to the custom officers, but passed through duty free. An angry Thayer threatened to report him unless he made good on the unpaid salary.

"I don't care. Tell all yer want ter. I ain't scared," was O'Brien's reply.

So Thayer did just that. The result was a lawsuit by the government against O'Brien over the unpaid duties which dragged out for two or three years, with O'Brien eventually having to make good on the claim as well as hefty court fees?<sup>19</sup>

We can only surmise that O'Brien's years of good fortune had peaked by 1874. In all probability, his financial

setbacks were serious enough to encourage desperate tactics for acquiring the "almighty dollar" by every means available to him. And, by all accounts, he did. The sad portrait of Poge O'Brien encompasses a fun-loving Irishman who raised himself to wealth from nothing through a natural shrewdness and toughness in business dealings, only to revert to his primitive origins, ruthlessly fighting over every apple core, and willing to profit from the vulnerability of others; thereby leaving a legacy of dishonor.

#### NOTES

1. Advertisement, *New York Times*, May 16, 1874.
2. C. G. Sturtevant, "Little Biographies of Famous American Circus Men," *White Tops*, February, 1929, p. 4.
3. George L. Chindahl, *A History of the American Circus*, p. 103. There are occasionally specific references to O'Brien malpractice. In 1878, for example, Linda Jeal and husband, William O'Dale Stevens, were on O'Brien's Campbell's Circus, but after leaving in late August had to sue to get their horse and wardrobe properties (John Daniel Draper, "Linda Jeal and Her Equestrian Kin," *Bandwagon*, May-June, 1987, p. 31).
4. Birkit Clarke, "Among the Showmen," *New York Clipper*, January 13, 1872, p. 324.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. George Conklin, *The Ways of the Circus*, pp. 22-28.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Charles H. Day, "Happy Days at the St. Charles," *Billboard*, November 5, 1904.
10. Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 324.
11. *New York Clipper*, September 3, 1864, p. 167.
12. Conklin, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
13. Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 324.
14. *New York Clipper*, November 13, 1880, p. 272.
15. *Utica (New York) Daily Observer*, September 17, 1874, p. 3.
16. Clipping, *Cleveland Herald*, December 22, 1875, n.p.n.
17. *Ibid.*
18. 1876 *Barnum Advance Courier*, p. 4.
19. Conklin, *op. cit.*, p. 31.



# The Ringling Cottage Cages: A Second Look

By Fred Dahlinger and Stuart Thayer

*Authors' Note: Almost simultaneous with the publication of our recent article on this topic, a rare document became available. We have chosen to use its availability as a reason to take up the subject cage wagons a second time.*

*John F. Robinson negotiated the lease of his family's famous circus name and equipment with the Ringling brothers in late 1897. A copy of the contract between them survives in the John M. Kelley papers and was kindly made available to the authors by his son, Curran P. Kelley. The document is typed with the month and year of January 1898, but the exact day was not entered despite the fact that John F. Robinson and Otto Ringling had both inscribed their names on it. While all of its terms and conditions make for very interesting reading, the part of interest here are three attached inventories. They provide some details about the famous John Robinson cottage cages and how they were acquired by the Ringlings.*

The John Robinson Ten Big Shows of 1898 was launched from Baraboo as a 24 car show. Various properties arrived in Wisconsin from the Robinson show's Terrace Park, Ohio

quarters as late as March 19, leaving just 39 days to prepare the show for its April 27 opener. The animals arrived that day and with them came their cages. The March 23, 1898 *Baraboo Republic* noted "The cages present a fine appearance, some of them being of the fifteenth century style and very attractive. They will cause one to look the second time at their unique construction." (Courtesy Richard J. Reynolds III) This should leave no doubt that the cottage cages came from the Robinson show and that they were not built new for the Ringlings. The Ringlings apparently leased a sufficient amount of properties from the Robinson clan to assure patrons that they were indeed seeing the famous Ten Big Shows. But the Ringlings must have completed the framing of the circus with equipment and animals which came from their

Figure 1. Two of the cottage cages that were designed by Emil Roe for the John Robinson show are depicted in this photograph. Robinson numbers 26 and 75 were quite similar to Ringling cages 72 and 70, and could have been built from the same plans. Albert Conover collection.

own holdings. John G. Robinson also traveled with the circus to carry on the family tradition and to lend authenticity to the name, not to mention watching out for his family's interests and observing the Ringling operation.

The builder of the cottage cages is thought to have been George Schmidt of Cincinnati. While his output never equaled that of his local rival Albert Bode, Schmidt did construct wagons for a few major circuses including Forepaugh-Sells and John Robinson. In late 1902 he solicited business from the Ringlings, who were then rumored to be taking out a second circus in 1903. On November 21, 1902 he quoted them "a very fanzy (sic) Cage, never been made for any body (sic), with a bay window, fanzy (sic) Roof covered with tin, carving as shown on design, pictures on Doors, to be 18 feet long, 5 feet high without Roof, 5 feet 6 inches or 5 feet 8 inches wide, 2 partitions inside complete with painting \$1500.00." In the same letter Schmidt enclosed "a photo of a Cage I builded (sic) for [John] Robinson, with 3 Gables Roof covered with tin, picture is taken of Wagon in the white no paint on. Cage is 12 feet long, 5 feet high without roof, 5 feet 8 inches wide, one partition inside, with carving as shown in picture (sic). Pictures on doors, 3-1/4 axles, platform springs, patent Wheels with 3 inch tires, complete with painting \$800.00." (Copy in Thomas P. Parkinson papers, Circus World Museum.) From the descriptions it appears that the proposed cages were quite similar to those which Schmidt had been building for Robinson. The Ringlings chose not to order any vehicles from Schmidt for 1903 or any other season, as far as is





known. His prices were higher than they typically paid their cousins, the Moellers, and Bode was a better salesman in the winter of 1902-1903.

The lease of the Robinson circus was not renewed for 1899. Following the show's closure at Rogers, Arkansas on November 7 the assets of the 1898 show were split. Part went to Baraboo and part to Cincinnati but there were problems with the separation. As the 1882-1914 Ringing Bros. Composite Route Book (page 107) later stated it, "as near as it could be separated into Robinson and Ringling Bros. property." Obviously some Robinson properties ended up in Baraboo and perhaps some Ringling assets in Terrace Park. Notably, four of those fancy cottage cages that attracted so much attention eventually found a new home. It is possible that the reason that they did not return to Cincinnati with the initial load is that they were not on the 1898 Robinson show, but more on that later.

While the three inventories attached to the January 1898 contract provide a description of the leased cottage cages, they do not completely resolve how the cottage cages became Ringling property. The first, a typed document, is headed "Robinson property-Contract Value" and is thought to be the one which was included with the contract. Someone, perhaps Otto Ringling, marked on it the numbers of various items received in Baraboo and their values, presumably to assure that the Robinsons fulfilled their end of the agreement and to set replacement values in the event of loss.

The list includes a bit of detail about the subject cages. Based on that information, we believe that we can align them with the numbers which the Ringlings later assigned to them. There were "3 Big 22 ft. bay window cages" valued at \$500 each. One of these would have later been Ringling number 70. Ringling cage 71 would have been either "1 big 16 ft. tower cage," or, more likely, "1 big 16 ft. green square towers on ends" that was also valued at \$500. "1 big 16 ft. black round bay window in centre" worth \$500 probably became Ringling number 72. 1 16 foot yel-



Figure 2. Ringling cottage cage number 72 was part of the parade lineup at Rockford, Illinois on May 2, 1899. The Ringlings perpetuated the long-time practice of adorning their cages with fine scenic paintings. Charles Kitto collection, courtesy Robert Kitto

low-square bay window in centre" appraised at \$500 later carried number 73 on Ringling. Also listed were four 14-foot and one 18-foot open cages, yielding a total of twelve cages in the Robinson lease.

A photograph exists of the cottage cages which can be conclusively dated as 1898. Surprisingly, it is not of the Robinson show, but the Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows. Cages 70 and 71 can be seen in this menagerie interior shot taken at Washington, D. C. on May 2 or 3 (Circus World Museum collections). Based on this document, we surmise

Figure 4. This parade view of Ringling cage number 70 was taken sometime between 1898 and 1900, inclusive. It follows Ringling cage number 68. The cottage cages were more costly than regular rectangular cages of the same dimensions. Authors' collection.



the following occurred. After the arrival of the Robinson assets in Baraboo, various pieces were selected to frame the 1898 Robinson circus. These two cottage cages were not among them. Whether knowingly or not, the Ringlings placed the two of them on the circus which bore their own name. One of the terms of the 1898 contract stipulates that the Ringlings "will not transfer any cage or tableau wagon or any other of the property so leased to them to be used with any other show; excepting by written consent of the said John F. Robinson." Being detail and control oriented, not to say honest, the Ringlings likely sought approval of the shift from Robinson as per the contract stipulation.

After the Robinson season closed on November 7, the two cottage cages continued to tour under the Ringling banner until November 28. For this reason, they returned to Baraboo and not Cincinnati at the end of the 1898 season.

The second list with the contract, written in ink or pencil, is headed with the phrase "Wagons sent to Cincinnati and for which John G. Robinson has signed receipt." These were ones which made it back to



Cincinnati with the Robinson property, no doubt immediately after the November 7 closing of the show. Included were "2-22 foot Bay Window cages" and "4-16 foot Bay Window cages," along with three open 14-foot cages. The total, nine, left three elsewhere.

A third document in the set, also hand written, was titled "To be sent to Cincinnati from Baraboo." It includes one 22-foot bay window cage, one 18-foot bay window cage and one 14-foot open den. These three account for the missing cages. Obviously, the eighteen footer was improperly described in one of the two previous lists and it is not known which one. We suspect that the two cottage cages which ended up in Baraboo were those which later bore Ringling numbers 70 and 71. One suspects that the Ringlings settled up on them without returning them to Terrace Park. How the other two cottage cages permanently became Ringling chattels remains a mystery. Perhaps the Robinsons swapped them in lieu of returning other Ringling property to Baraboo. No other Robinson equipment is known to have crossed over to Ringling at this time. Similarly, we know of no



Figure 5. The great expanse of the Ringling Bros. menagerie is evident in this view taken about 1908. Two of the cottage cages, Ringling numbers 72 and 73, are in the lower right foreground. Frederick Glasier photograph, courtesy Circus Galleries, John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art.

major Ringling asset which went over to the Robinson circus after the 1898 arrangement.

All of the arrangements to unscramble the merged properties must have left a stale taste for both parties to the deal. The difficulties become more real for the Robinsons when one learns that the lease of all of the Robinson property had cost the

Ringlings only seven thousand dollars for the entire season.

In regard to the history of cage number 70, astute readers will note that figure 2 in the first article was printed backwards, as have nearly all shots taken at that location on that date. The date of this photo, 1903, is also the earliest evidence that the twenty-footer was reconfigured into a shorter version. The long cage appears intact in a photograph taken at Madison, Wisconsin on June 28, 1902 (Circus World Museum collections), marking the rebuild as an activity of the winter of 1902-1903. It was rebuilt a second time before it ended up on Forepaugh-Sells in 1910.

## BILL KASISKA'S LETTERHEADS

**BRONCHO  
JIM'S  
WILD  
WEST**





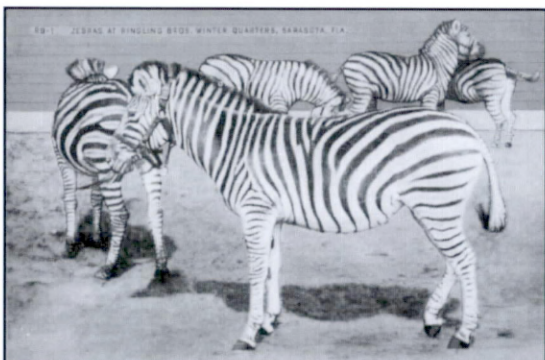
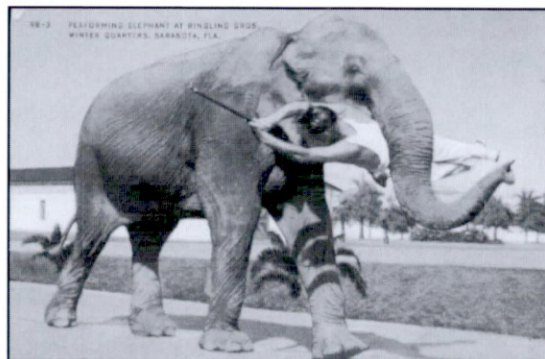
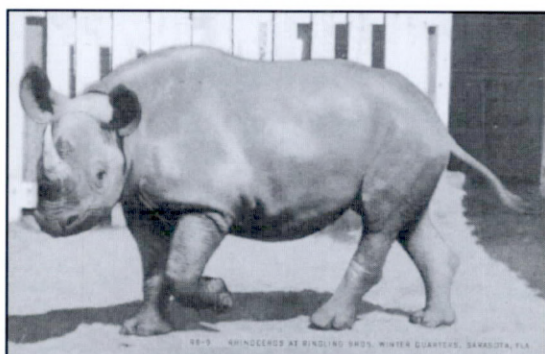
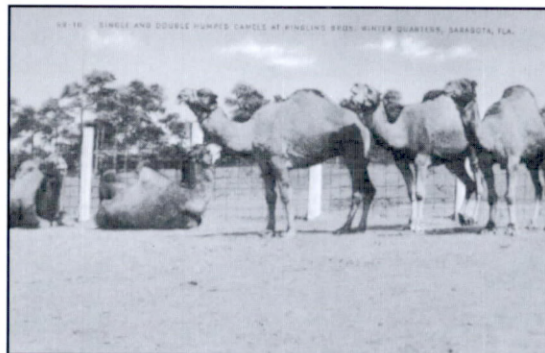
**J.B. ROCK**  
Sole  
Proprietor  
and  
Manager



Little is known about Broncho Jim's Wild West. It was likely a small wagon show touring in the 1900-1910 period. The printing is in red and the illustrations in black.



# POST CARDS OF THE RINGLING-BARNUM CIRCUS WINTER QUARTERS IN 1931





# The 1999 CHS Convention

On Wednesday afternoon May 19, 1999 Circus Historical Society members and guests started checking in the Quality Hotel LAX (meaning "Los Angeles Airport") for our sixtieth anniversary convention. They arrived from down east, the deep South, middle-America, Canada, France, and the Great American West. Included were nine current or former circus owners, surely a record.

The registration table was crowded as badges and packets were handed out, including nice CD's of Barnum's Kaleidoscope, a gift to all from Kenneth Feld.

The hotel's food court provided a gathering place for arrivals. The tables were soon filled as the traditional jackpots began. Refreshments were served by Miranda, official bar representative.

Thursday morning saw Guy Fiorenza man the registration desk as the officers and directors were summoned to the Reynolds quarters for their annual working out of major issues. Later all excitedly took their seats as the opening session was announced.

President Reynolds welcomed one and all and turned the gavel over to our secretary, who brought to the podium our keynote speaker, the man who heads the biggest of the big circuses, Kenneth Feld, CHS #4000. Feld talked about Barnum's Kaleidoscope in terms of his philosophy and vision as opposed to a later perspective which will be mentioned later. He then asked for questions saying, "You don't often get the chance to work me over." After several polite queries ("Why no elephants

on the Keteidoscope?") one cantankerous listener demanded, "Did you steal any of these ideas from the German circus Roncalli." Feld brought down the house with, "I will steal from anyone if it will help the show."

Next on the program was Michael Dee, curator of mammals for the Los Angeles Zoo, who gave a highly informative talk on various exotica at the zoo. He specifically addressed elephants, hippos, and tapirs and showed slides of many of them. His presentation was enjoyed by all.

After a lunch break, we reassembled for the afternoon papers, Mary Margaret Frances Shannon, presiding. Dr. Bill Slout's paper on "Strange Bedfellows," regarding the Poge O'Brien use of the Barnum title, 1874-1875, answered many questions regarding that curious association. As always, Slout did a highly professional job with his topic.

Stuart Thayer, after a year's absence, was back with "Sinking in St. Paul," the story of the 1875 Yankee Robinson show. We've come to think of Thayer as the dean of our craft and all were pleased to see

The John McConnell presentation on the wonderful Hanneford family

Current and former circus owners: (l.) Fred D. Pfening, Jr., Al Stencell, Luke Anderson, D. R. Miller, Gopher Davenport, and Ward Hall. Missing from photo Kenneth Feld, John McConnell and Ross Wanderly.

followed and was a joy to all. It included remarkable movie footage of the family act we oldsters recall.

On Thursday night we went by bus to see Kenneth Feld's new show, Barnum's Kaleidoscope. Walking on the midway, we didn't know whether to gaze at the innovative entrance or at the cluster of histori-



President Richard Reynolds III (l.), Kenneth Feld and Secretary-Treasurer Dave Price. All photos by Fred Pfening, Jr.

cal circus ticket wagons, on loan from the Circus World Museum. Displayed were old RBBB 123, three of the Springfields, and the famous Sells-Floto cottage ticket wagon. Only three members present were able to correctly date the last occasion when this ticket wagon had been on a Los Angeles circus lot. It was the 1959 Cristiani show date at the Pan Pacific lot.

In the reception tent (the food court) we feasted on such fare as candied almonds, turkey, roast beef, or ham and cheese croissants, Greek salads, and a variety of juices. We were there on a "dry" night or we could have sipped wines and lagers. This tent had a hardwood floor and such decorations as the elephant telescoping tableau which RBBB had





created for the 1987 King Tusk spec. Here we were entertained by tumblers, musicians, singers, balancing acts, and dancers. Michael Sporrer's wife Roberta, whom many of us had not met until this year, overwhelmed us by spontaneously joining a dance number and keeping perfect step with the troupe. This was typical of the spirit conveyed by this pre-show, that of making every person feel a part of the entertainment rather than a spectator.

During this pleasant hour, many made it to point to visit the restroom facilities as Feld had suggested. They are without question the premier donkiers of all time. They were clean and sparkling and decorated in a circus motif, and they were a far cry from those of old. I don't recall fresh flowers in those days.

Entering the main tent through a tunnel of lights, which we understand is the "Kaleidoscope," we were shown to our plush-covered seats, almost as good as the couches in front which had been scarffed up by filmdom's best known. We saw Gene Simmons and rumors said John Travolta was present but left early when his young child became restless. Tom Hanks, Melanie Griffith, and Nicholas Cage had been present a night or two earlier.

After a stirring overture the band, seated atop a highly carved proscenium, the performance began. The show does not have even one "good" act, the range being from superb to excellent, all held together by the delightful clown David Larible and backed by the truly "circus" orchestra of Rik Albani. One act after another brought accolades from an excited audience. As this is a convention report rather than a review of the circus, we will limit ourselves to describing one act which we believe says it all, the the graceful, daring and enchanting Sylvia Zerbini. After presenting her outstanding single trapeze act, she dropped to the ring below and presented a beautiful performance with white liberty horses. If you love the circus, you will love Sylvia's act. She had fallen some days



The entrance to Barnum's Kaleidoscope at night.

before, but had quickly returned to the air.

Will also mention Istvan Toth, advertised at 27 inches, the shortest man any member could recall seeing. Among other things he presented a liberty goose act. Our own David Carlyon participated with distinction in one of Larible's several routines using volunteers from the audience.

It was rumored that after many years of being pestered to tour America with a tented circus, Feld had finally said something like, "Okay, but we'll do it first class or not at all." Has he succeeded? One qualified and discriminating CHS member said on exiting the show, "That may very well be the best performance I've ever seen," a sentiment that seemed to express the opinion of many in attendance.

Friday's morning schedule began with John McConnell presiding. It began with Margaret Shannon's "Circus and the Birth of the Priceless, Child," a unique title an paper that only Shannon could have

Al Stencell, Richard Reynolds, Ted Bowman and Guy Fiorenza at the Magic Castle.



devised. Now would be a good time to mention our newest and youngest historian. The past couple of years have seen husband Stephen Ferguson joining Margaret at these affairs; this year they introduced us to tiny Alexandria, a precious child and a delight to the entire assembly, and who, by the way, was Christened during the week by CHS member Father Jerry Hogan. Incidentally the young lady was photographed in John Travolta's arms at the circus.

John Polacsek followed with his "Native Americans and the Circus," an interesting and meticulous study of an often-neglected subject.

Ward Hall closed the session with an excellent treatment of "Magic and the Circus," dealing with magicians who had participated in main performances, as opposed to side shows. Hall then went into his magic package pitch, complete with a ventriloquist figure, who to our amusement deliberated with Hall on several major points. All present received complimentary magic packages along with the fascinating information that every item therein had been rendered taboo by late twentieth-century "political correctness."

The afternoon session, presided over by Richard Reynolds, began with David Carlyon's absorbing paper covering new information that has come to light on Dan Rice, always a subject of historical interest.

Don Carson then accorded us a peek into his litho, courier and herald collection with some seldom-seen items, many of which brought forth recollections from such showmen as D. R. Miller, Luke Anderson, and Al Stencell. Miller told of himself and brother Kelly and their wives going to the Barnes show and of his suggesting on the way home that they call their show Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros.

The activity of the evening was a visit to Hollywood's famous Magic Castle. After enjoying prime rib and other tasty and sumptuous edibles, we had our choice of seeing



several magic shows and visiting several watering spots. Most saw the "big show" in the Castle's largest auditorium. Several headed for a smaller theater, where Glenn Faulkenstein and his wife, the former Frances Willard, daughter of Willard the Wizard, presented their famous "second sight" act. Ted Bowman told Frances afterward of seeing her father's tent show in Oklahoma years ago. Ted denies that this took place in Indian Territory.

Saturday morning saw Fred Pfening III presiding as Eric McConnell read a noteworthy paper on telephone promotions, a subject about which all wanted to learn more. Eric handed out samples of letters and pitches used in the field.

Al Stencell's presentation about girl shows was titled, "Let me Just Say She Does an Act on the Inside with a Male Partner," which in itself was enough to get our attention. Stencell's soon-to-be released book on the subject should sell well.

Eddie Murillo, who has produced



Father Jerry Hogan and Eddie Murillo.

numerous European circus festivals, told us of his work in this fascinating field.

The afternoon was devoted to the annual auction to benefit the *Bandwagon*. Richard Reynolds and John Polacsek alternated at the microphone. Alan and Linda Campbell expertly handled the collection of payments. Eric McConnell assisted but soon became so absorbed in bidding that he wisely took a seat and a number. Many scarce pieces turned

up for this occasion and bidding was spirited. We brought in \$4378.00 to insure the continued quality and use of color printing in our celebrated publication.

The banquet Saturday evening closed the festivities. Father Jerry Hogan asked the blessings of deity, however he is perceived, upon the bounty. After dinner President Reynolds introduced Ringling-Barnum's Tim Holst for an outstanding address. It was fitting that Holst would close our get-together with his perspective on the same subject as our keynote speaker. While Feld had talked philosophically of the new show, Holst spoke of the nuts and bolts of putting Kaleidoscope together. As Feld had given us inspiration, Holst gave us logistics. They really ought to work more conventions as a team.

And so ended our sixtieth anniversary convention on a note of optimism for the future of the circus. Our thanks the many who helped to make it a success. Dave Price

A 1998 recipient of the annual Antony Hippisley Coxe Award for books about the circus.

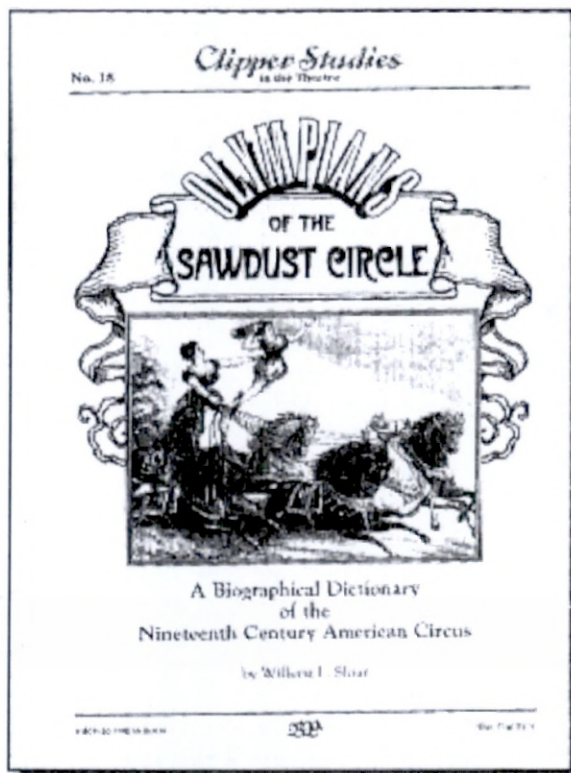
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# Side Lights On The Circus Business

PART EIGHT

By David W. Watt

May 31, 1913

"On account of the bad accident to the third section of the big circus train in which several of the performers were injured, there will be no performance this evening." Instead, I will tell you something about the boys that I met at different times all over the United States, most of whom were in the railroad business.

I think the first one of these to leave Janesville was one Ezra Miller. In about eighteen and sixty Ezra Miller patented a coupler and platform to be used on railway cars, and it was only a short time that it was adopted not only in this country, but all over Europe. I think it was in eighteen and sixty-four that Miller left Janesville with his family and moved to New York City, and I think that even up to this day there has been little or no improvement on Miller's coupler and platform. Through this device Mr. Miller has not only made himself famous, but made millions of dollars.

For many years while I was in the show business and more especially through the western country. It was very often in the morning that I would step out of the sleeping car and the first man to greet me would be the depot agent, and it was very seldom that I knew them. But they were boys for the most part that had received their early education in what was known in Janesville for many years as the Valentine School of Telegraphy. There is many a man in the railroad business today and has been for many years who is high up in his work and his first work in the business was his schooling in Janesville

with the Valentines.

Early in the eighties a young man came to Janesville by the name of A. D. Davidson and bought a scholarship at the Valentine school. While he had little money, the young man was thrifty and asked Mr. Valentine if he could find him a place where he could do chores for his board. Mr. Valentine soon found a place for the young man in the family of the late Dr. J. B. Whiting where he remained until his education in the school had been completed. All this time young Davidson had been doing odd chores for different families around town, and all the money that he earned he placed in the bank. After leaving Janesville he went west and now is a man quoted at many millions who is interested in several banks and is said to be the largest single land owner in Canada and is at the head of the Great Saskatchewan Land Company.

Another young man by the name of A. D. Morse, the late general superintendent of the C&NW Railway also received his education in the business at the Valentine school.

A. C. Murphy who is now superintendent of the Western Union Telegraph Company with headquarters in Chicago was also a graduate of the Valentine school. Mr. Murphy

said himself when Dick Valentine got him his first position in a telegraph office that this was the first dollar that he ever earned by his own efforts.

A. A. Krosbell, manager of a 50,000 acre sisal hemp ranch in Yucatan, Mexico, graduated here many years ago and started for the southwest to make his fortune. Since that time Mr. Valentine has heard from him and he is now one of the foremost businessmen in that part of the country.

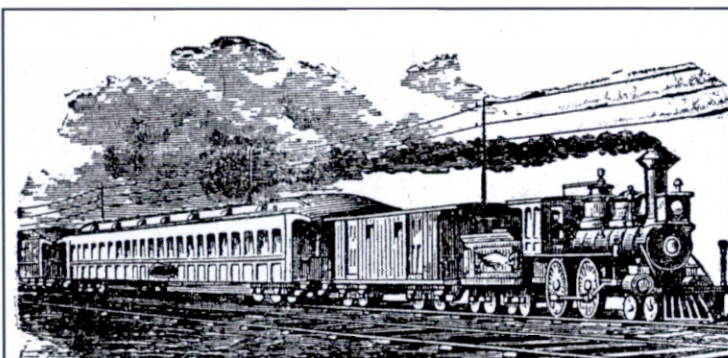
W. M. Bonar, auditor of the Pittsburgh Terminal Railway with headquarters in Pittsburgh, was a native of this state and it was along in the latter part of the eighties that he left here and started for the east.

James F. Ames, another young man who got his education in Janesville and is now well up in telegraph business, being superintendent of the Western Union Telegraph in one of the large western cities.

J. G. Wray, chief engineer of the Chicago Telephone Company, and Edward Wray, assistant superintendent telegraph CRI&P Railway, are Janesville boys, but not from Valentine's school.

D. W. Jerome whose home was in Janesville on South Jackson street commenced his work in the Valentine school, and after graduating here he went to Chicago where he secured a position in the offices of the New York Central Railway. He now is general western passenger agent of this great system.

F. A. Pechin who is now general superintendent of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway with headquarters in





St. Paul came to Janesville in the middle eighties, worked for his board in a private family and after graduating at the Valentine school secured a position in Chicago. It was only a short time until his services were appreciated by the great system and Frank Pechin's rise in business has almost been phenomenal for he now has charge of this great system of roads from St. Paul South and west.

Stanley M. Braden, another young man who was general superintendent of the Chicago Northwestern railway, also secured his early education in business in Janesville.

In one of the far western towns when I was with the Adam Forepaugh show, I had a long visit with the agent at the depot in the evening and he told me something about his experience in the Valentine school. He said, "You know after I had been there some four or five weeks it seemed to me that I never could learn the business, and I got discouraged and went into the office of Mr. Valentine and told him that I thought it was a question whether I could ever learn the telegraph business or not." He said, "Mr. Valentine smiled and said, 'Why young man, I have been watching you quite a little lately and I thought you were advancing faster than the average boys. Now, all you have to do is to stick to it and when it commences to come to you, it will be much easier for you.' Whether this was true or not," he said, "it gave me new hope and I went back to my work and it was not long before I commenced to see daylight ahead and I graduated as soon as the other boys, and as quick as I had finished my education there, Mr. Valentine had a position for me, but I have never seen Janesville since I graduated and left there for the west."

These boys that I met all over the western country had only the best to say of Janesville, the people and the Valentine school.

Among others who have left Janesville years ago and made good were the Cantillion boys--W. B., who is now general manager of the Northwestern railway, and his brother, James, who is also a division superin-

tendent of the same road in the far west. Only a few years ago when the owners of the road were looking around for the right kind of a man for the legal department they selected another man by the name of Edward M. Hyzer, an old Janesville boy, for this work. Mr. Hyzer took up his work in this department in Milwaukee where he remained a few years, and after the resignation of Mr. Bauer, who was general counsel of the road in Chicago, Mr. Hyzer was promoted to that position. It was then that they sent for William G. Wheeler to take Mr. Hyzer's place in Milwaukee. Mr. Wheeler only remained in Milwaukee a short time until he was sent for and is now in the main offices in Chicago as assistant counsel to Mr. Hyzer for the Northwestern system.

After reading the above list, which is by no means a complete one, would you not think that Janesville had done her share in furnishing men who were broad enough to hold the lines and guide the ways of such an institution as the Chicago & Northwestern railway?

Now, Mr. President and Secretary of the 25,000 Booster Club, would it not be a good idea to send all of these boys a button and ask them to join the Booster Club, for it goes without saying that these men would be only too glad to join the ranks and boost for the old homestead?

#### June 7, 1913

Two weeks ago yesterday the body of one Robert Campbell was found floating in the Hudson river in the suburbs of New York City. Robert Campbell or "Bob," as he was familiarly known around the old Adam Forepaugh show, started in business in about the middle seventies as a

bill poster, but Mr. Campbell had a fair education and was naturally bright and smart, and it was not so many years until he became one of the best agents in the business.

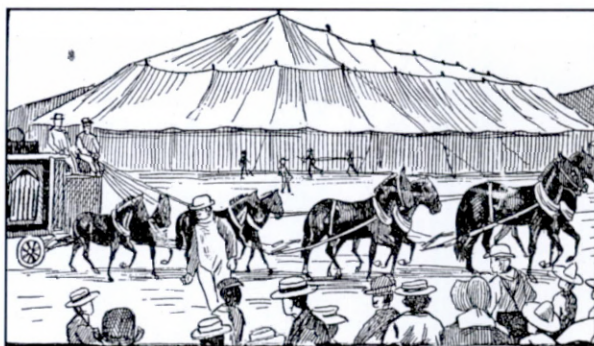
He was for many years the advance agent of the Forepaugh show, and although I had known him for some years, here was where Bob Campbell and I became intimate friends. All his contracts ahead were sent back to me and often a little note from Bob telling me of something that was a little out of the ordinary that he wanted me to look out for when we showed in the town.

It was along in ninety-one or two, I think, that he quit the circus business and settled in Chicago and organized what is still known as the American Bill Posting Company. Mr. Campbell and the late Burr Robbins, formerly of Janesville, being the promoters of the new venture which was one of the big money-makers of Chicago almost from the start.

Bob remained in this business for some years and made quite a fortune and then sold his share to Burr Robbins for \$150,000. He then took his family and made a tour of Europe and after a long rest they settled in London where he organized a company along the same lines as the one he organized in Chicago years before.

This also was a money-maker and some few years ago Mr. Campbell sold out his interest there and with family came back to New York City where he built a beautiful home overlooking the Hudson river and on the famous Speedway. Mr. Campbell had more or less business interests in New York City and it was his custom to leave home about 9 o'clock in the morning and take his lunch downtown, but he would always be at home for six o'clock dinner.

Two weeks ago yesterday morning Mr. Campbell left for his office saying to his wife that he would be home in plenty of time for dinner. About four o'clock in the afternoon he telephoned his wife that some business had come up unavoidably and he would not be able to get home until late and for them to wait dinner for him. But as the evening wore on Mrs.





Campbell became nervous, and fearing something might have happened to him, she telephoned two or three of his friends to find out his whereabouts, but none of them knew anything of him. The first news that Mrs. Campbell received was at 10:30 the next morning when she was advised that his body had been found floating in the river. Mr. Campbell had on his person a watch studded with diamonds and rubies said to be worth \$1,000, quite a slim of money and some valuable papers, all of which were missing, which led to the belief that he had been murdered and thrown into the river.

Mr. Campbell, besides his wife, had four children, two sons and two daughters, the oldest son being in school in France. Mr. Campbell and his family were booked to leave New York on the 14th of June and spend the summer in Europe.

One of the New York papers in speaking of Mr. Campbell and his business interests said that he was a man who had accumulated quite a little more than one million dollars and practically all this had been accumulated since Mr. Campbell was forty years of age. He was 62 at the time of his death.

He was a high class gentleman and was honest in all his dealings. Any lot owner who had done business with Bob Campbell was always glad to see him come their way again. But Bob has contracted for his last billboard and his last lot, but will always be remembered as a high class gentleman and a credit to the business.

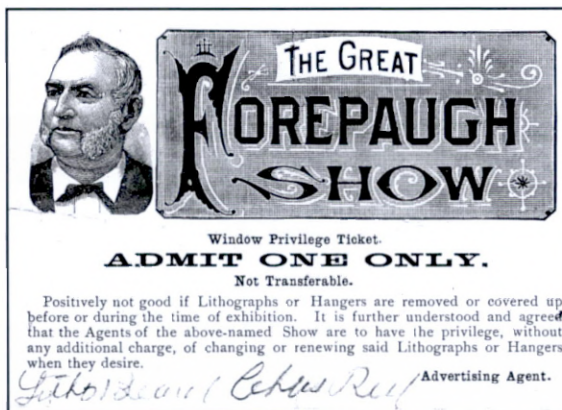
A few days ago I met an old gentleman on the street who shook hands with me and called me by name and he said, "You know when I left home I told my wife that I was going to be sure and see you and thank you for a favor that you did us many years ago, and up to this time I had not the slightest idea who you were." I said to him that I wasn't aware that I had ever had any business transactions of any kind with him. He said, "You know Janesville was our trading point for some years in the early seventies, but in seventy-seven we started for the far west with two covered wagons and seven head

of horses. We had our own cooking utensils and camped out all the way. The first day we made a short drive and camped near Cooksville, and after the next day's drive, we had gotten far enough away so that I don't think we ever met anyone we knew on the entire trip. We were bound for northwest Nebraska and landed there too late to do much in the way of raising anything that year.

"Here we settled and the first year which was seventy-eight our crops were almost a failure and the little money that we had taken with us was well nigh gone. The next year which was seventy-nine the Burr Robbins show came along and showed in a town eighteen miles from our home, and while we had scarce enough to live on, if the distance had been three times as far we would had to have gone to that show for we knew that it wintered in Janesville and that it might be possible that we would see somebody that we had seen before. I had my wife and three children with me and barely money enough to get tickets for the show, and when I stepped up to the wagon, to my great surprise, you were selling the tickets. Whether it was our poverty stricken appearance or what, I do not know, but you gave us all tickets for the show and said that we were welcome to them, and those free passes to the show that day meant more to us than many dollars did later in life."

I had a visit with the old gentleman for more than half an hour and it was one that I thoroughly

Window lithograph posting pass used by the Forepaugh show. Pfening Archives.



enjoyed for a heart to heart talk with his kind, which was one of the Denman Thompson of the old homestead style where their "yes" means "yes" and their "no" means "no," are met with only sometimes.

#### June 14, 1913

On account of the new suit which adorns the billboards of the circus this week, it might not be out of place to tell you something about what was known with the great Forepaugh show as the front of the show. You may think that we have been a little late in getting the new spring suit, but to tell you the truth, we were waiting for a mark-down--was \$8, now \$7.49.

Well, what was known as the front of the great Forepaugh show meant the ticket wagon, the main entrance and the side shows. In all the years that Adam Forepaugh was in the business he never had any partners and therefore everything went into the one pool. The sixty cent tickets which were sold in advance to those who wished to avoid the crowd at the main ticket wagon at one o'clock, the sideshow tickets and the reserve seats were all issued from the main ticket wagon and settled for there when the day's business was over. In a city like Chicago all the box and reserve seat tickets up to the time we opened the show were sold at Lyon & Healy's music store, and in country towns there was always what was known as the downtown ticket office which was always kept open during the day.

My first season with the Forepaugh show I found the tickets old and worn and consequently hard to handle, but at the close of the show the first season, I told Mr. Forepaugh we would have to have new tickets for the coming year and that I thought it would pay him to buy the best. The quality of the old tickets was very bad to commence with and in damp, rainy weather, they would stick together which made them hard to handle. He told me to use my own judgment and get the best which he thought would be the cheapest in the long run.

I went to a manufacturer of



playing cards in Philadelphia and told him what I wanted and that I wanted 10,000 adult tickets and 3,000 half fare tickets, and if I recollect, the price that I paid was about four times as much as Mr. Forepaugh had ever paid for tickets up to that time. Later on when we checked over the bills, when it came to the one for the new tickets, he lost his temper and it was some time before he could be quieted.

But years later Mr. Forepaugh often said that they were the cheapest tickets he ever bought and ten years later, when he died, the same tickets were in the rack and still in good condition. We could sell them much faster and they could be counted up much easier.

The tickets were counted after each performance, checked up on the books and when settling day came, I had to furnish the money for all the tickets turned in at the main entrance and this held good all around the show, the concert and the reserve seats. I had to be responsible for them all.

All the bills and all the help were paid at the one wagon and although the bookkeeping was single entry and very easily done, yet there was so much work there that it was early and late every day. The average person would naturally think that in large cities where we were located anywhere from two to eight weeks that the work would be easier on account of not having to move, but this was not the fact. Even the drivers and canvasmen would rather have one day stands. They knew just what to do every day and got more rest.

In Madison Square Garden in New York there were only two entrances to the show. One was on Madison Avenue, which was called the main office where all the box and reserve seat tickets were sold and all the bills paid. The other was on Fourth Avenue where the general admission tickets were sold. At this one office alone the sales would often run up to 8,000 tickets for one performance.

The largest receipts for a one day



A Buffalo Bill-Pawnee Bill lithograph printed by Strobridge.

stand that we had while I was in the business was at Montreal, Canada, when we took in a little over \$12,000.

In cities like New York, Philadelphia and Chicago the receipts at times would run up much larger for the reason that in these places there were box seats which sold for \$2 and hundreds of chair seats which sold for \$1.50.

The performers and officers of the show were paid every Wednesday and the working men every Saturday. There would be hundreds of them in line, but as most of them ran about the same and the silver was piled up handy. I could usually get rid of them in about an hour and a half. The performers' payroll was open at the same time every Wednesday. As fast as they would get through with their acts in the show, they would come out and get their pay. By the time the show was out at four o'clock they would all be paid and checked off. It was with a system of this kind that it was possible to handle so many people and pay out so much money and be able to balance your books every night. From one o'clock in the afternoon until nine-thirty or ten at night one of the busiest places around the great show was the main ticket wagon.

In eighty-five or six the show went west and we showed in Waterloo, Iowa, giving two performances. In St. Paul we gave three and in Minneapolis three, showing morning, afternoon and evening in the two latter places, and the receipts of the

three cities were only \$28.75 apart.

At St. Paul they had announced through all the newspapers that at the afternoon performance there would be an exhibition of fast ticket selling from the main wagon which would open promptly at one o'clock. They had dozens of men stationed between there and where the cars landed the people, warning them to have their money ready, to call for whole and half tickets,

that the man in the wagon was selling to make a record of fast ticket selling and that no one would be allowed in the crowd who did not have his money out ready to do business.

There was a man on a high stool at each corner of the wagon and one on top of the wagon with a twelve foot whip in his hand ready to remind anyone with the whip if he did not have his money out and ready. It was a very hot day and conditions were good and in fifty-eight minutes word was sent from the main entrance to close down the wagon, that the show was full. When the tickets were checked up I had sold 6,278 tickets in fifty-eight minutes and changed all kinds of money up to \$20. This in those days they thought was going some, and for some time the newspapers spoke of it as the fastest exhibition of its kind ever given. But now in the ticket wagons of the big shows they have four or five men, and they take their time. It is much easier for them and also better for the big crowds of people that attend the shows.

A few days ago I was visiting in the Hayes block with Levi Ellis of Hanover and during the conversation Mr. Ellis said, "Dave, we have enjoyed your articles on show life very much and I wonder if you ever showed in my old home in Pennsylvania." He said, "You know I was born and raised at Scranton." Scranton is a coal mining town and in those days was one of the toughest in that part of the country.

I said, "Yes, Mr. Ellis, I want to tell you something that happened to me



the first year that I was with the Adam Forepaugh show in Scranton. We were showing on what they called the flats at the foot of a big mountain and when the parade was out in the morning every little while a boulder the size of a wooden pan would come rolling down the side of the mountain. I was busy at work in the ticket wagon paying bills when a dozen voices from the outside shouted, 'Jump from the ticket wagon!' I just got out in time for they had loosened a big boulder the size of a large barrel, probably a quarter of a mile up the side of the mountain and down it came, I think at least forty miles an hour and struck one of the hind wheels of the ticket wagon and there was not a spoke left in the wheel. Mr. Forepaugh immediately put armed guards up on the side of the mountain and refused to allow anyone to pass. These he had to keep there until the show was over at night.

"We had just gotten over this scare when a policeman with what he said was a reputable citizen came to me and demanded the payment of \$50 for \$50 worth of mutilated silver coins which he claimed I had paid him the year before. The policeman said to me that I would have to give him good money for this or I would have to go up and appear before a magistrate. 'Well,' I said, 'We're a little bit on the magistrate order here and I will have to question your reputable citizen as you call him.' He said that he knew me well, that I was in the wagon that was there the year before and paid him this money for a check that he gave me. I questioned him as to whether he was the man that owned the billboards or furnished the feed or if it was paid him for license, and he could not tell just what the money had been paid to him for, but that he received it from the wagon. 'Well,' I said to him, 'stranger, this is my first year in the show business; never was in Scranton before in my life. The show was not here last year and it looks to me as though you would have to go somewhere else to make your deal.'

"The officer said to me that I would have to accompany them

downtown and I told him I was too busy and that there were occasionally conditions under which we never allowed a man to leave the lot and this was one of them. The officer left with his so-called reputable citizen and this was my first experience in Scranton, Pennsylvania."

Mr. Ellis told me that he still visited the old homestead occasionally and while conditions had changed there quite a little in the last few years, there was still many a one there who could not show a Sunday school certificate.

### June 21, 1913

In eighteen hundred and seventy-nine with the Burr Robbins show (at that time a wagon show), after putting in two or three weeks in this part of the country, we started down through the northwestern part of Illinois and this I think was the longest trip ever made by one show in one state. The show was in Illinois four months, going to the extreme southern part of the state, the western side, across the southern part and then coming back through the eastern portion of the state and crossing over toward the latter part of the season into Michigan.

One Sunday morning we pulled into a small town pretty well in the southern part of Illinois. After we had put up the menagerie and got the cages inside, there were hun-

The Janesville Burr Robbins Circus winter quarters in 1877. Circus World Museum collection.



dreds of people gathered around the grounds. One man stepped up to me and wanted to know if I was the boss. I told him that in the absence of Mr. Robbins I looked after the show and asked him what he wanted. "Well," he said, "nothing in particular, but this show don't look anything like as big to me as the bills claimed it was."

"Well," I said to him, "it looks to me as though the show was plenty big enough for the town. The town don't look to me as though there had been a new house built in twenty years and but few of the old ones have been painted."

"Well," he said, "the town may not look good to you, but I'll tell you this, it's a pretty good country around here and you will find tomorrow that your tents will be filled to the ring bank."

And he was right, for this was one of the big days of the season. We had to put down straw in front of the seats in the afternoon to accommodate the crowds and nearly everybody seemed to stay for the night show for the crowd was nearly as large. This proved true in many places all through the southern part of Illinois where the towns, and even the country, presented a desolate appearance and yet everybody seemed to have money to come to the circus.

We went to the extreme southern part of the state; and in our long ride from one town to another we would many times pass house after house built of logs with but two windows and one door. While the show made plenty of money, it was very hard on the horses and the people. Many of the rides were long and over the hardest kinds of roads. People came to the show in all kinds of vehicles. One would often see a horse and a mule hitched together bearing several hundred pounds in weight; and occasionally an oxen team that had come many miles and must have necessarily started in the night. There were many sights in that country worth seeing, especially to one who had always lived in the north.





While many of the people would look poverty-stricken in every way, they all seemed to have money enough to get into a circus and this proved one of the biggest seasons that the Burr Robbins show ever had.

Only last week the Hagenbeck and Wallace show was sold to a syndicate and the last of this name, "Uncle Ben" Wallace, who has been in the business practically all his life, will retire from the circus. He will retire on Monday, June 30th, on which date at Peekskill, N.Y., the Hagenbeck-Wallace shows, title, goodwill and property will be formally deeded by Mr. Wallace to a syndicate headed by John O. Talbot of Denver, C. E. Cory, Peru, Ind., and J. B. Warren, Chicago, among the stockholders in the Carl Hagenbeck-Great Wallace Shows Company, a corporation chartered under the laws of the state of Indiana, with a capital stock of \$300,000 of which issue \$100,000 is preferred and the remaining \$200,000 is common stock, are Ed Ballard, an Indiana capitalist, W. H. Harrison, proprietor of the Hotel Davenport, Davenport, Iowa, and Charles Hagaman, who for years has been legal adjuster for the Hagenbeck-Wallace shows.

The combined wealth of the syndicate which is to take over the Hagenbeck-Wallace shows will approximate fifty millions of dollars and all are thoroughly qualified from a circus standpoint to properly handle this vast tented enterprise. B. E. Wallace, or "Uncle Ben" as he is known in circusdom, is quoted in professional circles as being the wealthiest showman in the world and at sixty-nine is ready to retire and stay retired.

Under the new regime, C. E. Cory, who for the past eighteen years has been a prominent Wallace executive, will be general manager and John O. Talbot acting as assistant manager.

Two sleepers used by Miller Bros. 101 Ranch in 1913. Pfening Archives.

The winter quarters will be at Peru, Indiana, the new owners having leased them from B. E. Wallace. The board of directors for the first year will be John O. Talbot, president, C. E. Cory, vice-president, and Messrs. Ed Ballard, J. B. Warren and Charles Hagaman. Under the new management there will be no change in quality or policies of the Hagenbeck-Wallace Shows.

After a severe illness, Col. Cody (Buffalo Bill) is again back with his own show and every afternoon and evening he is to be seen in the saddle leading the grand entry of the congress of all nations. The Two Bills Show, as it is known, will open in Chicago next month for a two weeks' engagement. It is fair to say that the business will be a record breaker as Col. Cody is a great favorite in Chicago. The Showmen's League of America, of which Buffalo Bill is the

A. L. Parson, manager of the Ringling refreshment department. Pfening Archives.



president, will turn out in a body and give him a home coming and welcome as Chicago is the home of the League and where they will eventually locate their clubhouse.

The 101 Ranch Wild West which is billed to show here on the 29th of July is owned by Miller Bros. and Arlington. Mr. Arlington, who is acting manager, was for many years manager of the privileges with the Barnum show and was a warm, personal friend of mine in the old days.

Mr. Arlington stuck steadfastly to the business and now has an interest in one of the most money-making shows on the road. He commenced with the Barnum show in the early eighties and I don't think he has been out of the business a single season since. It was said of him many years ago that when he once made a friend, he never lost him.

After the retirement of "Uncle Ben" Wallace from the business Buffalo Bill will be the oldest continuous showman still in the business.

#### June 28, 1913

About twenty-two or three years ago a young man by the name of Parson, whose home was in Darlington, Wis., started in show business with the Ringling Brothers. His first venture was that of looking after the privileges, which meant the candy, popcorn and peanut privileges of the show. When Mr. Parson first started in the business, he only employed four or five men; but as the show grew, the privileges became greater and necessarily took more men to do the work.

"Butch" Parson, as he was known with the show, had a large square stand in the menagerie which was well supplied at all times with candy, popcorn, lemonade and everything of that kind to catch the youngsters. Mr. Parson as manager of the privileges was a success from the start, and year after year his business grew as the show grew, and it was only three or four years till he had a good sized bank account.

He commenced many years ago buying farming land in South Dakota. After a year or two he engaged the services of an old friend from Darlington by the name of Crockett and sent him west to take



charge of his land interests. For the most part, these lands are between Vern and Mitchell and are said to be among the finest in South Dakota.

Mr. Crockett proved to be a hustler and Mr. Parson spared no money on improvements and stocking the farm with well bred horses and cattle. The Parson Ranch, as it is now known, is something about 4,000 acres and the principal industry is that of raising and shipping of cattle to the Chicago market. Only last spring Mr. Parson and his manager shipped about 400 head of fat, two years olds to the Chicago market which was said to be one of the finest shipments ever sent to the Chicago stockyards.

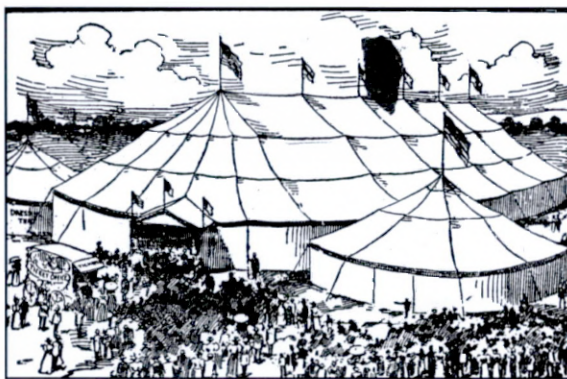
Mr. Parson quit the show business some two or three years ago and is now putting in all his time on his western ranch. He is now a middle-aged man and the foundation of his fortune and large western ranch was laid by selling lemonade, popcorn and peanuts with the Ringling Brothers.

In talking with Mr. Parson, he said he was with the Ringling show twenty-one years and never had a losing season. He said, "While I sometimes feel that I would like to hear the band playing and watch the large crowds, still I am well satisfied to be where I am and took after my farm and cattle."

Mr. Parson had one hundred and sixty-five head of young calves on his ranch this spring which must be a fine sight to look at as they are all high bred ones. In two or three years they will also be ready for the Chicago market. This only goes to show the money it is possible to make with a circus selling popcorn and lemonade.

In the middle eighties with the Adam Forepaugh show, one of the strong features was the western riders. About twenty-five cowboys were with the show that season. Among the rest was a young man by the name of Charles Cody, who was a great bronco rider and always said he could ride anything that wore hair.

We were in Boston, Massachusetts for two weeks and about the middle of the engagement Mr. Forepaugh made arrangements with young



Cody to ride an elk that was with the show. This elk was as wild as a western jack rabbit and could run much faster. But young Cody said if they would take him from the cage, take him in on the hippodrome and cinch his saddle on him, he would ride him around the hippodrome track. If I remember rightly, it took about twenty-five men to get the elk onto the track and cinch the cowboy saddle on him.

The entrance between the hippodrome track and the menagerie was barricaded with high planks about ten feet high so that the elk could not make his escape back into the menagerie. When young Cody got into the saddle, away went the elk on a two minute clip around the hippodrome track and when he came to the barricade, he attempted to jump it, but struck the top of it with his breast and was going at such a fast speed that although he dropped, young Cody went on over the barricade some fifty feet out into the menagerie.

The men rushed to him and expected that he was killed, but found him still breathing and took him into the dressing rooms and sent for a doctor. While he recovered, it was some days before he was able to drive a bronco and it is safe to say that this was young Cody's last overland trip on an elk.

These rough riders of the west were willing to try and ride anything that they could cinch their western saddles onto. This same season Mr. Forepaugh advertised that he would pay \$1,000 for any bronco that could not be ridden by some one of his famous rough riders. We were showing in Hartford, Conn., and along toward the close of the show two men came onto the grounds on horseback

leading a wild bronco between their horses. They had him fastened to their saddles and he looked the bad one that he proved to be. One of them came up to the ticket wagon and said, "We want to see Mr. Forepaugh. We have got a wild bronco here and we are after his \$1,000."

Mr. Forepaugh sent back after a rider known as "Wild Horse Harry" and when he came to the front door, Mr. Forepaugh said, "Here's a wild bronco for you to ride."

After getting some of his friends to help him, they took the bronco around into a vacant lot, threw him onto the ground and cinched the saddle on him and "Wild Horse Harry" made his start with no bridle or anything to guide him about the field. It was a very hot day and they had not gone ten rods when Harry took off his big wide brimmed hat and was hitting the bronco on one side with the hat and then the other and the bronco was buck jumping in every direction. But the rider sat there as easily apparently as the average man would sit in an armchair. After a short time the bronco saw that it was no use and he dropped in the field where he lay for more than an hour before his owners could get him up and started back for home. In a jesting way Mr. Forepaugh told them to go home and get a tough one and come back, that this kind were too easy for his kind of riders.

A few days ago Mr. E. L. Brown, manager of the Caloric Company, was surprised to find among his mail a letter from the Young Buffalo Wild West Show from Syracuse, N.Y.; and on opening it found that it was an order for a fireless cooker from the famous rifle shot Annie Oakley. Annie Oakley wanted one of a special make with three compartments, but smaller than the average size. She said she wanted it to cook their evening lunch for her husband and herself after the show. She sent a check in the letter and ordered the cooker sent to Toronto, Canada. She remembered from last year that Janesville was the home of the fireless cooker and this one will surely do its share of advertising for the



Janesville factory.

Yesterday morning at 10:30 Mr. and Mrs. Al Ringling pulled into Janesville in a large Pierce Arrow touring car on their way to their home in Baraboo. They left the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago yesterday morning at exactly 7 o'clock and at 10:30 pulled into Janesville. They left in a few minutes for Madison where they took dinner and in the afternoon drove to their home in Baraboo.

Mr. Ringling said that neither the Barnum nor the Ringling show had encountered any bad weather to speak of and both were doing a fine business, the Ringling show making the eastern country and the Barnum show on its way to the west.

#### July 5, 1913

A few days ago a friend of mine handed me the following story which he clipped from a Chicago paper. While I have never heard of the so-called famous rider or her horse, it may be possible that the story is true. I will give it to you as it came to me, for this week I want to give you something about the famous riders and especially the famous horses and other trained animals which went to make up the performance of a large show:

"There is a very old horse standing at a post behind the South Chicago police station dying of starvation because he is not worth fifteen cents, although twenty years ago he could not have been bought for \$1,000. He was so nearly dead when his condition was noticed that he could not eat the food that was tardily offered. He was a circus horse, the favorite of 'Mme. La Joie, Queen of Equestriennes,' who is also down and out now. John Majewski, a transfer man, 8612 Wentmore Avenue, sold him yesterday to Tony Novak, a little boy, for fifteen cents. Tony started to lead the horse home, but the animal fell down on the way. Tony demanded his money back and it was refused."

James Robinson, the famous bareback rider, retired from the business and took up his home in Louisville,



New York's Madison Square Garden as pictured on a lithograph. Pfening Archives.

Ky. where his brother-in-law ran a dry goods store. This was about in the middle eighties. Mr. Robinson had one of the best bareback horses in the business, and although he was twelve years old many riders in the country were anxious to purchase him, but Mr. Robinson had made up his mind that he would keep the old horse as long as he lived and retire him from the business and make him one of the family.

Along in September we were to show in Louisville on Monday and got in there on Sunday morning. We had a young lady with the show by the name of Josie Ashton who was comparatively new in the business but a fine rider and without a good horse. I went and found Mr. Robinson and told him that Miss Ashton was anxious to buy a horse and would give him any kind of a fair price for his and that I thought the horse would be just as well or better off in the business with the care that it would get there as it would with him.

Mr. Robinson finally consented to sell him to Miss Ashton and she readily paid him \$1,200 for his old ring horse. This was on Monday morning and Monday afternoon when Miss Ashton appeared in the ring on the back of the old horse there were hundreds of old employees around the show to give him the glad hand and show their appreciation of his return to the business. Miss Ashton kept him for several years, and after his days of usefulness were over, she saw that he had a

good home to spend his declining years in.

It was in eighteen and eighty-seven in Madison Square Garden in New York that Adam Forepaugh, Jr., first appeared as caller for the eight quadrille dancing elephants. As the saying goes, "elephants never die," and the last I knew of them they were still with the Barnum or the Ringling shows doing the same

act.

It was this same spring that Blondin, the great rope walking pony, appeared for the first time. He soon became famous all over the country and up to the time of the death of Adam Forepaugh was still doing his rope walking act. But with the death of Mr. Forepaugh the show went into other hands and later Blondin went back into the herd of ponies in the menagerie and was looked upon by thousands of visitors daily as a common ordinary pony.

For many years back, one of the most prominent figures in theatrical circles in Chicago was George Castle. The firm was known for many years as the Cole & Castle string of theatres and for many years they have been the leaders in the particular kind of theatrical business. George Castle always had an eye for a good horse and has owned many famous trotters and pacers and every summer and fall many years he has been a prominent figure on the racing circuits. Mr. Castle always had the best trotters that money could procure and always did his own driving.

I remember several years ago that one of his most consistent trotters was a horse called Henry L. While there were many faster horses in the circuit than Henry L., he was good headed, always steady and would usually wind up in the front ranks. Mr. Castle kept him for several years and there was always a good cash balance to Henry L.'s credit when the circuit closed in the fall.

But as time went on, the hard, bruising work [took its toll] and Henry L. could no longer bring home the hot biscuit and honey for his



owner that he had done in former years. It was then that Mr. Castle made up his mind to retire Henry L. and find a good home for him to spend the balance of his time. Several gentlemen in Chicago were anxious to buy him for a road horse and one of Mr. Castle's particular friends offered him \$500 for Henry L., but he was not for sale at any price.

Along about this time Mr. Castle called on his old friend W. W. Briggs of Delavan, Wis., who by the way is handling a string of trotters at the driving park in this city. He said to him, "Briggs, I want to make you a present on certain conditions. I am going to retire Henry L. and I want to find a good home for him, and if you will come to Chicago and get him and give him a good home as long as he lives, I'll make you a present of him."

This Mr. Briggs was only too glad to do. I think this was about six or seven years ago and all that Henry L. has to do at the Briggs' homestead is to carry Mrs. Briggs and the children to the post office and back three or four times a week, which is only a distance of half a mile as Mr. Briggs' farm joins the city limits of Delavan. If all owners of faithful servants when they arrive at the time when they need less work and more care would find a home for them as does George Castle for his, there would certainly be less use for humane societies. Charles Fish, the famous bare-back rider of years ago who was known all over this country and Europe as the greatest trick rider that ever lived, had an old white horse which was known in the business as his finish horse. I think at the time of Mr. Fish's death the horse must have been seventeen years old and yet in the circus ring looked like a five year old. Mr. Fish's home was in St. Albans, Vermont and when he died he was taken back there and buried and his old white finish horse was turned out into pasture near St. Albans to spend the balance of his life. In all my experiences in the business I have never known a ring horse that was famous in his time in the business that was not well cared for when

old age overtook him.

The first year that the Burr Robbins show went by rail we had a large pair of mules which were used for what was known as the pull up train. It was their business to pull all the wagons up the incline into the train and also to pull them out in the morning. Along some time about the middle of the season, one of the mules died. The one left was the larger of the two and white as the driven snow and by the name of Gabe. While they tried to find a mate for Gabe, he seemed to do the work alone about as easy as he did with his mate and so was allowed to finish the season all alone.

That fall Gabe was sold to a coal company here in the city who worked him alone on a coal wagon. Some three or four years later, after I had returned from the Forepaugh show in the fall, along about dusk one evening the doorbell rang. When I went to the door, there was a man delivering coal on Main Street who asked me where a certain person lived. The minute I took a look at his turn-out in the street, I knew the old white mule and called out to my wife, "There is old Gabe drawing a load of coal."

The minute the old mule heard the name, which he certainly had not heard for four or five years, he turned his head and looked at me and whinnied. I walked out into the street and visited with him two or three minutes and old Gabe rubbed his nose all over my face. How do we know but what Gabe asked me there and then to get him a place back with the cir-

Adam Forepaugh litho used in 1887. Circus World Museum collection.



cus as he was tired of toting coal all over Janesville, that he was anxious to get back where he could see the excitement and the crowds and after his work was done could lie down on a clean bed of straw in the horses' tent which was always located near the big top and listen to the music. For ought we know this might be what old Gabe was saying. But there is one thing certain and that is this: that if we would feed our old faithful animals more sugar and larger lumps of kindness, they would not only think more of us, but we would certainly think more of ourselves. This was the last time that I saw old Gabe.

### July 12, 1913

Many years ago with the Adam Forepaugh show there was an old gentleman by the name of Jerry Ferguson who at one time was a half owner in the Van Amburgh show; but as the saying goes, the Van Amburgh show went "on the rocks," and Mr. Ferguson and his partner lost their all. A few years after that Mr. Ferguson came to the Forepaugh show and was kind of an assistant to Mr. Forepaugh around the front door. While "Jerry" Ferguson, as he was known around the show, was an old man, he was a large man, fine looking and a good dresser and had a voice that you could hear all over the show. During the time that the crowds were coming into the show in the afternoon and evening Mr. Ferguson would stand on a tall stool and talk to the people in a loud voice and tell them not to rush, to take their time, that there would be a chance for everybody.

Right back of Mr. Ferguson, inside the laps of the menagerie, stood the bird cages. There was an old parrot in the cage that went by the name of Pete. Pete was a great talker and all the time that Mr. Ferguson would be pleading with the people not to rush, to take their time, that there would be a chance for everybody, old Pete would yell at the top of his voice for them to take their time, to not rush, that there would be a chance for everybody.

We were showing on the fairgrounds in a town down in



Ohio, the name of which I have forgotten, and the man that had charge of the bird cage had the door open and was washing out the cage. Old Pete the parrot would often be set out on top of the cage while this work was going on. On this particular morning the man set Pete out on the corner of the cage while he did his work and much to his surprise when he went to put Pete back, he was not to be found. The man did not worry for a time, thinking that Pete had just flown over onto another cage and went looking around the menagerie, but Pete could not be found anywhere.

The entire fairground was searched for some time with a dozen or more men looking for the old parrot, but they could not find him. When the news got to Mr. Forepaugh he remarked that he would rather have lost any elephant with the show than old Pete. Many times when Mr. Forepaugh would be passing through the menagerie by old Pete's cage, if Pete saw him he would yell out at the top of his voice, "Hello, Adam. Where you going?"

After the afternoon show had commenced Mr. Forepaugh ordered his horse and buggy brought around to the front door and he got in and started out in search of old Pete. On the opposite side of the road from the fairground was a corn field, and as it was in the fall of the year the corn had commenced to dry up considerably, and Mr. Forepaugh had not gone far when he saw hundreds of crows sailing around over this corn field and darting down and back into the air again. By the time Mr. Forepaugh got right opposite them he thought he heard old Pete's voice.

He stopped and climbed over the fence into the corn field and as the crows were darting around, old Pete with his feet clutched fast around a corn stalk was yelling at the top of his voice, "Take your time; don't rush. There'll be a chance for everybody." Hundreds of these crows had picked away at old Pete until many of his feathers were gone and in several places his back was bleeding, and yet



Major Gordon W. Lille and Col. William F. Cody. Pfening Archives.

he would yell out while they were picking him to pieces, "Take your time. Don't rush. There'll be a chance for everybody."

At Mr. Forepaugh's appearance the crows flew away and old Pete turned and saw his old friend coming and yelled out, "Hello, Adam. Where you going?" Mr. Forepaugh said, "Well, Pete, it don't look to me as though I had come any too soon."

He took Pete in his arms, took him back to the menagerie and the man in charge of the bird cage took care of him. It was several days before he got him doctored up again. It is safe to say that old Pete was more than pleased to get back into his cage again among his friends.

The reception that was given Col. Cody (Buffalo Bill) at the opening of his show in Chicago and at different times during their engagement must have been gratifying to the old hero. The Two Bills' Shows opened a nine days' engagement in Chicago Saturday afternoon, June 28th, to an audience which was remarkably large considering the extreme heat which prevailed. The night house was excellent although it was apparent that the hot weather had a ten-

dency to reduce the attendance.

On Saturday evening, June 28th, a luncheon was tendered by the Show-men's League of America to General W. F. Cody and official staff of the Two Bills' Shows on the roof garden at the Hotel LaSalle. In the party from the Two Bills' Shows were: General W. F. Cody, Major Gordon W. Lillie, Louis E. Cooke, Major John M. Burke, Charles Thompson, Richard Radford, Harry Wilson, Johnny Baker, Charles Metius and Mesdames Lillie and Radford.

Members of the Show-men's League of America who were there to commemorate the occasion were: Chas. Address, first vice-president; Warren A. Patrick, secretary; Walter F. Driver, E. P. Neumann, Jr., H. M. Shoub, Charles Bell, Arthur Davis, Harry Prentice, Dave Edmunds, Fred L. Griffith, M. S. Bodkin, A. K. Greenland, H. M. Howara, R. M. Bickerstaff of the United States Lithographing Company and Edward Morrison were also members of the party.

On July 1st at 11 o'clock a breakfast was given through the courtesy of the Hotel LaSalle management to Gen. W. F. Cody and Major Gordon W. Lillie in the form of a peace pow-wow. Indians, cowboys, cowgirls, prominent suffragette leaders and other noted personages made up the warm but happy party. Edward Itzinger, a prominent attorney of Chicago, presided as toastmaster and opened the affair formally by presenting Gen. W. F. Cody, who responded with a brief talk, expressing his gratitude in behalf of his associates and himself for the royal entertainment afforded him. After breakfast was served, one of the Sioux Indian chiefs present spoke for his red brothers, his remarks being interpreted by Red Feather. The chief expressed the goodwill of himself and his braves toward the white brothers and his remarks fitted in admirably with the



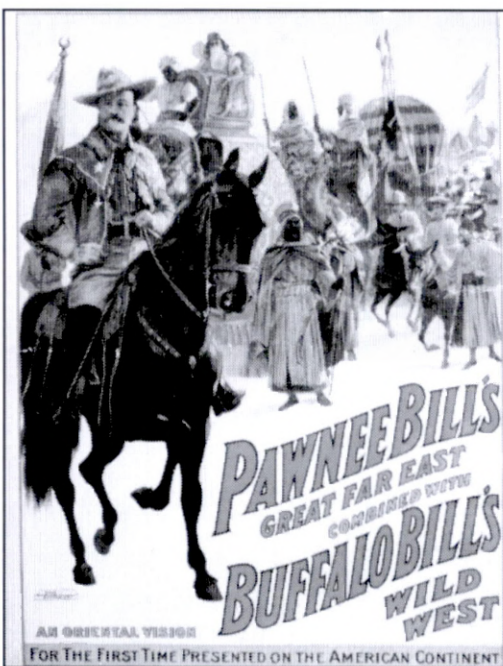
atmosphere of peace which predominated in all of the talks. Other noted speakers were: Prof. Frederick Starr of the University of Chicago, Mrs. George Bass, a leading member of that organization; Major Gordon W. Lillie and Major Burke of the Two Bills' Shows. Gen. W. F. Cody, who spoke last in pursuance to a request by the toastmaster gave a few of his intimate experiences with the Indians. The breakfast was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable functions ever arranged in this country. Not a detail was overlooked to make the affair memorable.

On July 2nd at noon the Hamilton Club entertained Pres. W. F. Cody, Major Gordon W. Lillie and executive officers of the Showmen's League of America at a luncheon in the clubhouse.

Wednesday afternoon, July 2nd, at the Hotel La Salle a suffragette breakfast was tendered to Pres. Gen. W. F. Cody of the Showmen's League by the ladies most prominent in bringing about the enfranchisement of women in Illinois. Gen. Cody was the only male guest.

Among those who gathered at the Buffalo Bill peace pow-wow at the LaSalle were: Howard Elting, president of Chicago Association of Commerce, W. Rufus Abbot, secretary Industrial Club of Chicago; Guy Guernsey, president of the Hamilton Club; Wm. B. Austin, president of Indiana Society of Chicago; Charles F. French, president of the Fellowship Club; Capt. Hicock, adjutant general of the Department of Lakes; Virginia Brooks, settlement worker; and Nelson Lampert. Messages were read from Gov. Edward P. Dunne and Mayor Carter H. Harrison, expressing their sincere regrets in not being able to be present. Moving pictures were taken of the event as well as several still photographs of General Cody, Mrs. Grace Wilbur Trout and the Indian chiefs smoking the pipe of peace, probably the most interesting group of pictures ever made.

The first year of the big hippodrome and the reproduction of General Custer's last battle, we had



An interesting Two-Bill poster with the Pawnee Bill title listed first. Pfening Archives.

about one hundred Indians with the show. We were billed to show in Lowell, Mass., on Monday and arrived there early Sunday morning. We were showing on the fairgrounds and immediately after breakfast in the cook tent there were twelve of the Indians who started out looking for a

Cover of the 1913 Buffalo Bill-Pawnee Bill Wild West Show program. Pfening Archives.



place where they could secret themselves and have a quiet game of poker, for the average Indian is a natural gambler. They soon spied the judges' stand which was a building about fifteen feet square and found the door unlocked, and they were soon inside with their blankets spread on the ground and the game was on.

Lowell at that time was closed down tight and the only thing that you were allowed to open there on the Sabbath was the Bible. Shortly after this the chief of police with his hurry-up wagon and a couple of assistants were on the ground seeking who they might devour that belonged to the circus. While making their rounds over the show they took a peek in through a crack in the judges' stand and found the Indians playing poker. They soon backed up the wagon, broke in the door and arrested the twelve Indians and took them down to the city lock-up, the chief thinking he had made a fine capture. He came back and notified Mr. Forepaugh that he had twelve of his Indians on arrest at the lock-up for gambling and asked him what he was going to do about it.

"Well," said old Adam, "I don't think there's very much for me to do." He said, "Young man, if I were you, I would go downtown and talk to the district attorney. These Indians are government subjects and I think after you have had an interview with your district attorney, if you can fix it up with the Indians so that they are satisfied, you had better bring them back."

The chief made a trip downtown and had a conference with the district attorney and in the course of an hour the Indians were all back to the fairgrounds with a warning from the chief that they could not play poker in Lowell, Massachusetts. While the Indians could all play poker, there were but few of them that could talk English. But they had quite a little to say about the big and strong building they had seen and all seemed to have enjoyed their trip. This was the only arrest made of show people while we were in Lowell.



# AL. G. BARNES CIRCUS

THE SHOW  
THATS  
DIFFERENT

IN A CLASS  
BY  
ITSELF

"TUSKO"

LARGEST  
ELEPHANT  
IN THE  
WORLD

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A FOOT  
TALLER  
THAN  
JUMBO



WILL EXHIBIT AT